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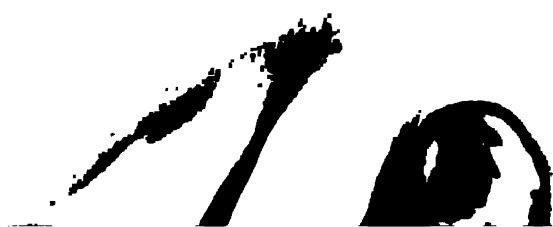
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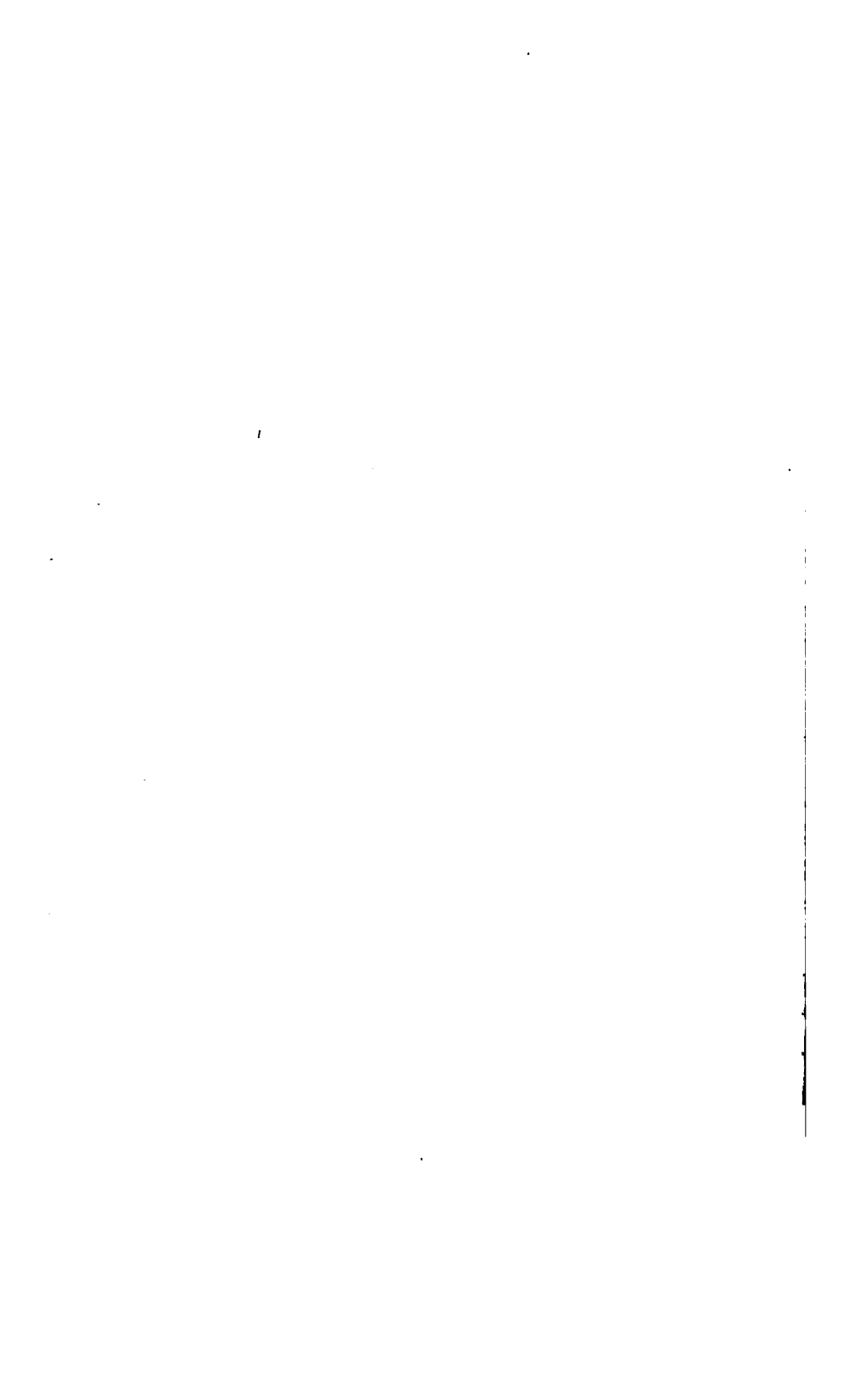
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6

STORIES

OF

TORRES VEDRAS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF
"ADVENTURES OF AN IRISH GENTLEMAN."

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL I.

LONDON:
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By the Secretary of the Board

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TO THE RIGHT HON.

GENERAL LORD HILL,

G.C.B. G.C.H.

&c. &c. &c.

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF HER MAJESTY'S FORCES.

MY LORD,

To whom can the following sketches of a soldier's wandering life be more appropriately dedicated than to your Lordship, more especially when they are the idle pratings of an "old Second Division man"—of that division of the Peninsular Army so much indebted to your Lordship, for that constant care and paternal solicitude which can never be forgotten. How often has not your Lordship's hospitable board afforded to the officers about you, happy hours of repose (although they were by no means idle at the time) after the fatigues to which your *corps d'armée* was incessantly exposed!

Even in the presence of the enemy before Bayonne, when cantonned in *Vieux Mouguères*, we must recollect that while your table groaned under the weight of a welcome visitor—a formidable *British Baron*—private theatricals would enliven the evenings, although at the risk of meeting the foe, the very next moment, in buskin or in female attire, when the Frenchmen might have believed that rival Joans of Arc had taken the field to avenge St. George's cause !

That your Lordship may long enjoy health and happiness to recollect those times and all the good that your Lordship has done during your many well spent days, when grateful memory may ultimately soothe the final passage to that eternal abode of bliss which awaits the just,

Is the sincere prayer

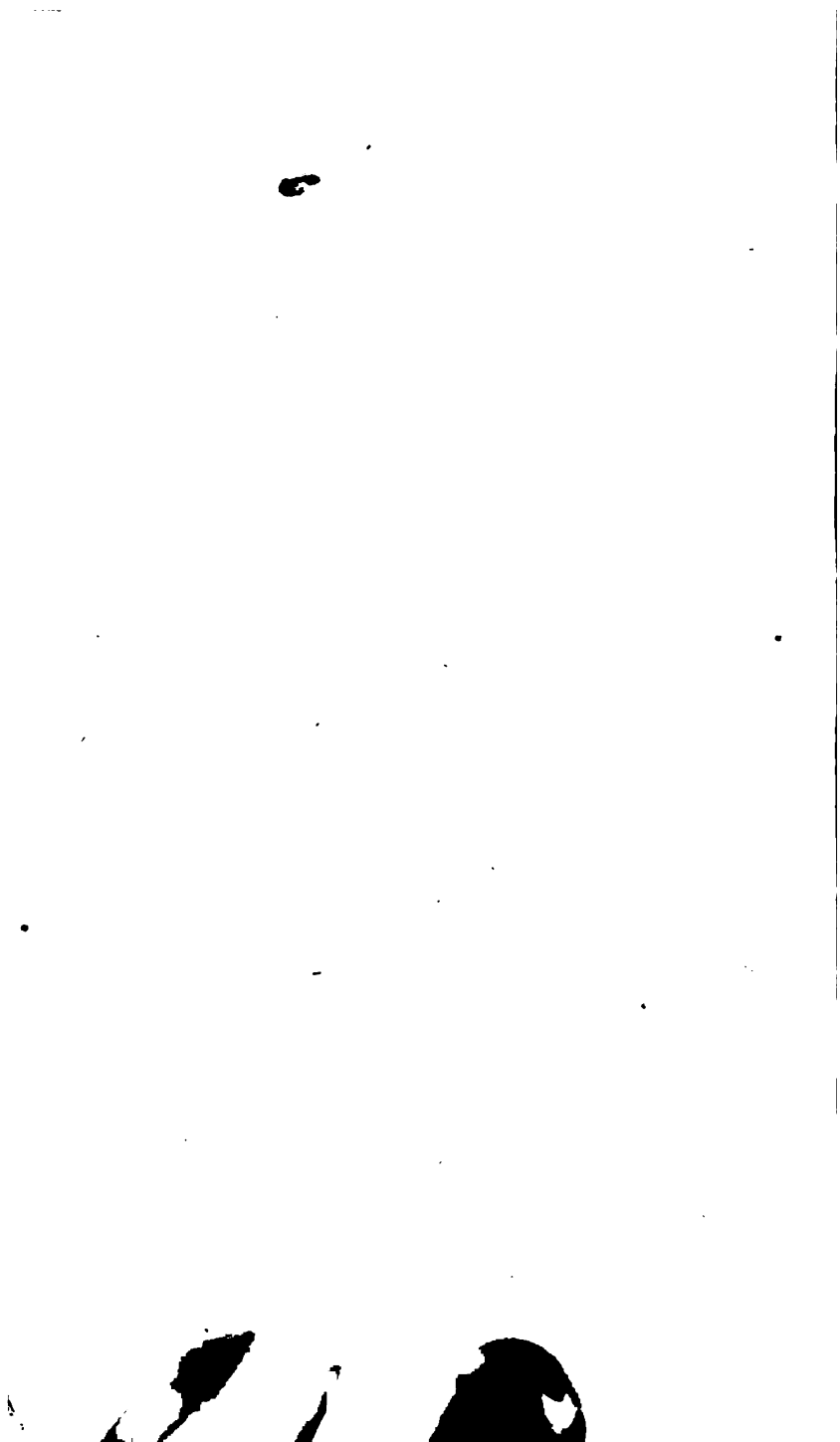
Of your Lordship's

Obliged and devoted servant,

THE AUTHOR.

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INTRODUCTION.

It is difficult to say, whether a state of peace or of war affords the best means of becoming acquainted with the real character of nations. In an open state of hostility, there is less need of professing friendly sentiments that are not felt, or of dissimulating our animosities. In peace, on the contrary, the assumption of a benevolent disposition becomes politic; and while we husband our resources for a future war, we avail ourselves of every means that intimacy affords to add a moral strength to our future physical exertions.

It is during the international communication of tranquil days, that we attain a knowledge

of the nature of those domestic broils and struggles for a power that party intrigues daily weaken. It is then that we are enabled to discern the most vulnerable points of attack—more open to the skilful diplomatist than the battered breach to the engineer's approaches—that we learn how we can best avail ourselves of intestine feuds, to cripple a country's resources, and upon what fulcrum, in the hour of need, we can rest most effectually the mighty levers of interest, pride, and party hostility, civil and religious discord, and unprincipled speculation.


With the *verbiage* of patriotism and national honour upon his lips, the diplomatist, who is out of place, exerts every nerve to shake the influence of his more successful competitors in the national markets, and to depreciate their actions by pointing out every error that might endanger the country's safety in the event of future wars, actually affording more useful information to our natural and common enemies, than bribery could obtain for them, when hostilities might commence.

During our occasional intercourse with the officers of the French army in the late wars, the two countries entertained a much higher sense of respect towards each other than they do at the present moment ; and we bore in their estimation a reputation of generosity which our continental tourists and emigrants most certainly have not confirmed. In the Peninsular, although the French troops had experienced many a severe blow, and been checked in their usual career of success, still as the war was not popular, their national vanity diverted them from disasters which they solely attributed to the treachery of their leaders, and the discord in their councils ; they did not admit any military superiority on our side, and therefore did not view us with a jealous eye. Not so in their cities and their circles : our greater wealth and our ostentation, our conduct too frequently overbearing, our superiority in manufactures, and our successful rivalry in arts, sciences, and literature—compel them, although reluctantly and unconfessed, to look upon us with envy ; and envy is too frequently the forerunner of

deadly hate. An Anglomania may, to a certain extent, prevail in their adoption of fashions, and many points of desirable imitation; but the copyist abhors the original.

The only class of French society which has ever seemed to entertain cordial feelings towards us, is the military, from their recollections of former associations; and although the name of Waterloo must ever be offensive to their ears, there exists a frankness and candour amongst soldiers, which invariably leads them to respect the brave.

The lines of Torres Vedras afforded us frequent opportunities of cultivating this friendly intercourse, and thereby becoming more intimately acquainted with the public and private character of our enemies than now when we are friends and allies; and the frankness of their prisoners in conversation with us gave us perhaps a better insight into the real state of their society, than we have subsequently obtained in their own country. Rarely did we meet a French officer who did not express an anxious desire for peace and future amicable relations,



not without boasting of the expression attributed to Frederick of Prussia,—that if France and England were united, not a gun should be fired in Europe without their permission.

In these celebrated lines there not only did exist the utmost cordiality between us, when meeting upon neutral ground, but the French seemed on various occasions to have overcome the deadly hate and revengeful sentiments they entertained towards the Portuguese. One circumstance of this nature is worthy of being recorded.

The first battalion of the Lusitanian Legion, afterwards the 7th Caçadores, was in front of a French regiment, and between them, near the royal palace of Runa, were certain windmills, the possession of which became a point of frequent skirmishes, whenever the French came down to grind their corn. This unprofitable contest continued for some time, until both parties being convinced of its absurdity, approached each other unarmed, and came to the mutual understanding that this contest about windmills, which truly recalled that

of Cervantes' crack-brained knight, should cease. Since that period, until the retreat of Massena, it was soon found that a friendly intercourse, and an exchange of civilities was far preferable to an interchange of leaden bullets, which, to many of the parties, rendered the grinding of their daily bread an unnecessary process.

It is somewhat strange, but long after this friendly meeting, during the temporary cessation of hostilities that took place between our army and the French on the 29th July, 1813, on the heights of Villalba, near Pampeluna, while the soldiers of both countries were scattered together about the fields, bearing off their respective wounded, and picking beans for their messes, several officers and men of the same French regiment came again in friendly contact with their old Portuguese friends of Torres Vedras, when many a hand, which but a few hours before had grasped a deadly weapon, and made many a former boon companion over grog and cigar bite the dust, was now held out in cordial recollection, until the bugles' loud

blast summoned the temporary friends to renew the work of blood.*

The more frequently this exchange of civility took place between the French and the British troops, the higher we appeared to rise in their estimation ; and when their prisoners observed the apparent laxity of discipline, and want of personal pride and military "bearing" amongst our troops, they expressed surprise at their gallant achievements ; and it was on such occasions that they would remark, "that troops

* It was this regiment (the 7th Caçadores) which, under the command of my gallant friend, Sir John Scott Lillie, made a brilliant attack on a formidable French post the following day, the 30th July, which they carried in the presence of both armies, that crowning the surrounding heights, were looking at the conflict in silent expectation, as no reinforcement could have moved to the support of the brave band, in time to save them from what appeared inevitable destruction. However the boldness of the onset was such, that the enemy fled in confusion and dismay. It was after this unequal struggle that the Duke of Richmond, then Earl of March rode up to their commander, expressing the Duke of Wellington's high approbation of the conduct of his battalion, then reduced to four officers and 150 men.

like these knew not when they were beaten," one of the most flattering compliments to a nation's true courage and dauntless intrepidity, as the French were obliged to confess that the valour of their men was very frequently artificial and gregarious.

But to expect that France can ever be cordially attached to our country, would be as absurd as to have expected amity between Rome and Carthage. We cannot dissimulate our pride ; but they well know how to disguise their hate. In their intercourse with our wealthy emigrators, they observe and keenly feel that

Defect of manners, want of government,
Pride, haughtiness, opinion and disdain,
The least of which, haunting a nobleman,
Loseth men's hearts.

And while the obsequious foreigner bows to us, to quote again the language of our bard, he will mutter, in mental soliloquy,

If I can catch him once upon the hip,
I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.

The only prospect of a lasting peace between us is in a mutuality of interests. May such an alliance long continue; and let us hope never more to witness many of the horrors which the following sketches record.

How far, during the *halcyon* days of peace, we have profited by continental intercourse, time alone can show. In the meanwhile, let us endeavour to preserve our nationality. Already, stiletos are worn, and stabbing has become a common practice; while waltzes, which, upon their introduction amongst us, were considered by the fastidiously pure as objectionable, even when their movements were rapid and exhilarating, are now of a languishing and voluptuous character, which *may* become *national*. The learned know that the poet Meursius, who was an excellent judge in such matters, described one hundred and eighty-nine dances of the Greeks, each of which expressed a different grade of passion. I shall say no more—*nous verrons*.

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TORRES VEDRAS.

THE FLIGHT.

(AUGUST 1810).

THE sun was shedding its parting rays over the verdant hills of the *Sobrero Formoso*, and the crepuscule casting its blue mantle on the once happy woodland of that lovely spot, while the deep moan of the mountain breeze murmured through the thick foliage of the wide-spreading cork and chesnut trees. But no sound of rural mirth enlivened the scene! No fond words of anxious affection were whispered under the inviting shade of the

lofty *castanheiro*. The young peasant was no longer attuning his rude guitar and his untaught voice to sing to his own *rapariga* some venturous imitation of the Lisbon or the Brazilian *modinhas* he had heard in passing snatches in neighbouring towns, or tripping with her over the green sward enamelled with the wild hyacinth, the light and empassioned *landon*.* Lamentations and subdued notes of misery and impotent wrath, issued from the deep glen, where mournful, on the grassy banks of a sluggish stream, was assembled a group of fugitives, quitting perhaps for ever the cottage that gave them birth, the shelter of their household tree, the venerable cemetery where the ashes of their fathers were gathered under a flowery mound. The dull bell of the neighbouring convent no longer summoned them to hear the swelling organ and the chants of Heaven's elect, imploring intercession and forgiveness. A distant shot, re-echoed from time to time o'er the distant blue hills that

* A popular dance.

bounded the horizon, and then a blast of the war bugle, now approaching, now receding on the flitting breeze, warned the anxious and trembling exiles, that they soon might need to hurry their pace and not be permitted even a few stolen minutes' repose, to renovate their exhausted frame, worn out by bodily fatigues and mental misery.

They now had halted. Salvator's glowing pencil would not have found it easy to delineate the groups. Here, a lusty monk was assisting an affrighted nun off her jaded mule, a nun, who since the welcome or the dreaded veil had concealed her ebon tresses, had never ventured beyond the holy precincts of her sanctuary, or sought another shade than the orange and lemon bower of her convent garden; now her monastic robes were concealed under the ample folds of a dark *capa* or cloak, while a large *lenço*, or 'kerchief was closely drawn over veil and beguin. And there were seen holy friars and priests, and brethren of the *misericórdia* planting in damp sods their banners bearing the images of their patron saint or the dove of

mercy, sylvan chapels on which they placed with careful hands, the crucifix, the candlesticks, and the sacred vessels, which they had borne away from their gorgeous altars, and saved from the Vandals' grasp.

Around this primitive shrine were grouped, in picturesque variety, the aged labourer, supported by his weeping children, the faint and exhausted patient dragged from his bed of sickness on the enemy's approach, while young girls and boys were occupied in unloading way-worn donkeys, of baskets of provisions and *alforjes** crammed with such articles of wearing apparel as could be gathered in their haste, or in collecting dry sticks and kindling fires to prepare a hasty meal, while others were concocting a *sopa de pastor*, or a salad of bread and water, oil, vinegar and garlic that needed no culinary delay, to gratify their craving appetite before they were compelled to resume their march.

Few were the men to give variety to this motley picture. The youth of Portugal had been

* A rude sort of saddle-bags.



called to the field, to join the line, the undisciplined *ordonanzas** or the unwilling militia. The short and hurried repast over, prayers to the Virgin were put up, and the rosaries of young and old, the *still* hoping and the disconsolate, were told with tremulous hands, while *aves* of supplication, interrupted by the groans of the sufferer or the cries of famished infants, were murmured throughout the sad assemblage; and now and then curses hoarse and deep were denounced against the ruthless invaders.

A stranger wrapped up in a dark cloak, his brow shaded by a broad Spanish *sombrero*, approached the mournful party; he was leaning against the trunk of an antique *sobro* casting around him a mingled look of contempt and compassion. He did not long remain silent, but presenting to a venerable looking peasant, who seemed to be the patriarchal leader of the fugitives, a tin canteen of wine, asked him: "Wherefore, my friend, this desperate resolution? this flight from your homes

* Levies of peasants.

—to wander in hunger and in misery from your happy abodes ?”

“ Wherefore !” replied the old man with concentrated despair delineated in every feature, “ wherefore has the invader desolated our country with his reckless bands ? and scattered misery and ignominy wherever his detested eagles have descended ?”

“ Because,” replied the stranger, “ listening to the base advice of England you have fled from true friends ; and instead of receiving the French as brethren, and partaken with them your frugal fare, you have left your hearths desolate—your villages a desert.”

“ Is not Manitto* amongst them ? Do you think that the Portuguese can forget their slaughtered comrades—the butchery of their wives and children at Beja and at Evora—the massacre of Villa Viciosa, the birth place of our Braganzas !—do not our altars still

* *Manitto* or *one-handed* was a nickname given by the Portuguese to Loison, who had lost an arm, and whose atrocities contributed materially to indispose the inhabitants against their rapacious invaders.

smoke with the blood of our priests, calling aloud for that vengeance which insulted Heaven will wreak upon impious France?—Go to, whoever you are.”

It was the old Capitão Mor of *Sarzedas*, whom the stranger addressed, who had been the first to rouse the peasantry to arms, and to counsel the flight of their wives and children. Still undaunted in his perilous mission, the intruder continued :—

“ And do you not dread the avenging arms of the imperial legions, led on to victory by a prince whose conquests have obtained him the proud name of the spoiled child of victory? His word—his solemn promises are those of peace; he is sent to secure your unhappy country from the thralldom of England, whose speculative emissaries order you, under pain of death, to quit your homes, destroy all that you possess—nay, who threaten you with a traitor’s doom if you do not sacrifice, to their avaricious plans, the very mills that prepare your bread—and reduce fair Lusitania to a dreary desert and a charnel house. Be-

hold !” he added, drawing a paper from under his cloak, “ behold this proclamation of the generous, the noble chief, who commands your real protectors : listen to his supplications before it be too late.”

By this time, the animated conversation between the old peasant and the stranger had collected round them a group of listeners amongst whom the bold emissary might have read in the fierce countenances of the monk and priest, the danger of his mission.

The Spaniard (for such was the visitor of the mournful glen) proceeded to read aloud the address of Massena ;—a dead and awful silence prevailed while he thus addressed the all attentive fugitives.

“ Portuguese—His Majesty the Emperor of the French has put under my orders an army of one hundred and ten thousand men to expel the perfidious English, your pretended friends. Against *you*, he has no animosity ; on the contrary, it is his fondest wish, to promote your happiness : dismiss from your beauteous country those locusts

who consume your property, blast your harvests, and paralyse your efforts;—the Emperor is a friend who wishes to make you the happiest people in the world. But for the insidious counsel of heretical England, you might now have enjoyed peace and tranquillity, and been in possession of that happiness which you have blindly rejected, accepting proposals that will long prove the curse of Portugal. Awake then to your interests; distinguish between friends and enemies. The Emperor of the French is governed by the principles of universal philanthropy—the English have put arms into your hands, arms which you know not how to use. *I* will instruct you—they are to be the instruments of annihilation to your foes.”

Scarcely had these last words been pronounced than the speaker bit the dust, shot through the head by a wounded militia-man, who had escaped from the captive garrison of Almeida, and who, despite the solemn articles of its capitulation, had been compelled to enter the

service of the enemy. The ball that pierced the traitor was of British lead.

"Thus perish all foul traitors!" exclaimed the soldier.

"And accursed be their souls!" added a broken-down abbot of a Franciscan monastery.

Though flowing sluggishly from the fatal wound in an instant the red blood of the ill-fated spy gushed through twenty *facadas*;* while his ensanguined garments were torn in ribands off his mutilated corpse, amidst loud yells of furious indignation and ardent supplications to the blessed Virgin that such might be the doom of all the enemies of her holy altars.

Several proclamations of Massena, similar to the one thus savagely interrupted, were found about the mercenary, and in his pocket-book handed to the old Capitão Mor, various letters in cyphers directed by the traitors, De Alorna and Bareiros to their Lisbon correspondents—Bareiros, the commander of the

* Knife stabs.


artillery of Almeida, who in his reckless treachery had blown up five hundred of his countrymen and then deserted to the lines of his employers.

It was the militia-man who recounted this base treason to the peasantry around him. Death to the knife, death to the French and to all traitors! was again re-echoed as a war-whoop, while crossing themselves, and once more pouring forth a fervent prayer to the Mother of Sorrow, the harassed fugitives sought a few hours' repose.

The clock of the church of Sarzedas had not yet finished striking, and the hour of twelve still solemnly broke upon the stillness of the night—the old Capitão Mor with his son, a youth of fourteen, was pacing in stealthy steps around the dismal bivouac, when the tramp of horses' hoofs struck their ear. In an instant all were on foot and ready to fly, leaving what little they had saved from destruction in the power of the invader. Already mothers had seized their sleeping babes and were ready

to rush wildly through the dark forest with their precious burdens, when a friendly voice responded to the tremulous challenge of the aged chief.

Several Portuguese horsemen slightly wounded, and leading their jaded steeds, now joined the party. They had fought with the French cavalry at Atalaya for the first time; and had honourably fleshed the British swords they wore in the blood of the best troops of France. Their language was lofty and exulting; fifty of the brazen helmet dragoons of Napoleon had been slaughtered or captured by these brave Portuguese. They distributed wine and biscuit, and offered to the women and the children the assistance of their horses; the priests and monks once more became cheerful—nay, the very nuns ventured to smile upon their former spiritual comforters as when in days gone by their mutual sins or peccadilloes had been absolved; hope seemed to beam once more upon the wretched wanderers, and soon all was again in motion;



although the distant report of cannon announced that the work of war was elsewhere breaking the usual hours of man's repose and murdering sleep.

Day dawned in all the beauty of a Lusitanian sky; and the *gum cistus* that had shed its ephemeral blossom during the night, was fast dropping its beautiful petals, while its aromatic fragrance embalmed the morning air. Various bands of fugitives were crowding on the main road, from bridle-paths and rocky passes — goats, pigs, and sheep were driven before them, and groaning wagons, each moving heavily on its ungreased axles, were laden with bedding, furniture, and baskets of poultry, fruit and eggs. There were seen also toddling donkeys staggering under a weight of *toucinho*, *presunto* and *salchichas*;* detachments of friars marching in warlike order under various banners and standards representing sundry saints, virgins and martyrs; some carrying rusty fowling-pieces on their

* Bacon, ham, and smoked sausages.

shoulders, others bearing crucifixes and the various gilded images of their omnipotent penates.

Yet in this glorious sacrifice of all they held sacred, as the sun beamed in splendour upon the motley procession of these houseless creatures, they were cheerful; grief and glee seemed combined—and ever and anon, some of the party would venture to hum a national tune, while heavy blows of the *cajado** upon the sluggish donkeys' wrinkling hide would accompany an oath or an execration on the *Francezes*, with no complimentary allusion to the chastity of their mothers. Straggling militia-men and *ordonanzas* occasionally fell in the line of march, boasting of all they had or rather had not done, what they meant to do, and swearing that, although the English might be considered powerful on the ocean, the Portuguese were far more valiant warriors upon land.

During this retreat of the rural population from the invaded districts, it is no doubt true

* A hooked stick carried by Portuguese peasants.



that many fugitives were obeying the proclamation of Wellington, who denounced the penalty awarded to traitors on the heads of all those who did not *drive* the country as they proceeded; yet such was the dread of the invader, that the peasantry, urged by their priesthood, needed not this coercion. Had Wellington's orders been as cheerfully obeyed by the inhabitants of cities and their magistrates, had every mill been dismantled, and all provisions carried off or destroyed, the French would have found a desert instead of ample supplies for a considerable period; but the misled patriarch and the party of the Souzas had tampered with all the public functionaries and defeated these wise precautions.

Such, notwithstanding, was the desolate state of the country the French had to traverse, that Massena thus represented it:—

“The horrors committed by the English are deplorable: they cut down the corn, destroy mills, houses, barns, and make a desert of the unfortunate country they were invited to

defend. They thus violate all the laws of nations and of war; this base people are accustomed to respect nothing but interest—their only law.” Yet, despite their promises of protection, scarcely had the hordes of France crossed the frontiers, than those unfortunate people who placed reliance in their fair words were mercilessly plundered.

As the fugitives were thus wending their irregular course towards Villa Velha, they were joined by a priest mounted on an ambling mule gaily caparisoned, armed with a long French dragoon sabre, with a comely wench seated behind him. As usual, he was saluted by the respectful peasants as *Senhor Cura*.

“I am no curate,” he replied, with a loud laugh; “I’m a pastry-cook, a *pastelêiro*, a *biscouteiro*—a French pastry-cook—dead hand at making cakes—the abbess of St. Clara of Pinhel, my cousin, cannot make better cakes! better *tortas*, *bolos* and *biscoutos*.”

The party fancied the worthy curate demented, when he reined in his mule, and

slackening his pace to enable the pedestrians to keep up with him, he told them he would relate how he had taken to the trade of pastry-cook.

STORY OF THE CURATE.

You all know the beautiful village of Valde Mula; well, I am its unworthy curate. The other day, I had gone to see my old uncle at Alfayate, when I heard that these rascally Frenchmen were scouring the country. I had left behind me my niece here, *Maria das Chagas**—St. Anthony bless her!—and I knew that she would stand but a poor chance with those accursed vagabonds—so off I set. I had scarcely reached the entrance of the village, when I was informed that a French dragoon officer and four of his rascals, had arrived in the place to order ten thousand rations and

* *Maria das Chagas*. Whenever a Portuguese child is christened Maria, it is always followed by some reference to our SAVIOUR'S passion. Thus, *das chagas*, means of the seven wounds inflicted—*das lagrimas*, of the tears—*dos dolores*, of the agonies, &c.

levy a contribution, which unless furnished in twenty-four hours, poor Gomez Pinto, our *juiz de fora*, was to be hanged the following morning, when the brigade was to have marched in. I next learnt that this fellow had taken up his quarters in my house—thinking, no doubt, that a poor priest kept a good table, and had a pretty niece—and he was not altogether wrong; what was to be done? It was night, and I thought that poor *Maria das Chagas* might ere this have required *Maria da Ajuda*;* so I went to my cousin Jose da Silva, the apothecary, told him that there were only four Frenchmen in my house, and an officer in my chamber, and that it was expedient to *settle* them: so saying, I asked him for an ounce of white arsenic, a pistol, a few prayers for my success, and off I went.

I first repaired to the stable, to put up my mule—I called my poor *Moço João*,† but the deuce a *rapaz*‡ could I find; no answer, and no wonder, for on opening the stable-door,

* Mary of assistance.

† Boy John.

‡ Lad.

there was *Moço Jodo* dangling by the neck from the rafters. Good beginning! said I; this is your philanthropic protection! we shall see how it will end.

Up stairs I walked, and what did I see! but this infernal French officer seated at my table with Maria by his side, drinking my best *Borba* wine and munching my cakes—cakes sent to me by my cousin the Abbess of Pinhel—and such cakes! why the whole Beira could not produce such delicious cakes!—Well, I ordered my niece to prepare a supper for my guest—he kicked me out of the room, saying my niece was no cook, and that he would cut off both my ears, if I did not forthwith toss him up a *malassada*,* while his roaring comrades swore that they would throw me into the river if I did not give them some wine. Wine indeed I gave them—properly sweetened with cousin José's double refined white sugar. They were in an out-house at some distance, so having well dosed them, I turned the key of the door and left them to enjoy their liquor.

* A sort of omelette.

There was no time to be lost—I tossed up a *retortillo* and took it to the captain, who had taken Maria on his knees, and had the impudence to kiss her before me ; but what vexed me most, I fancied that Maria did not seem to take it amiss.

“ Jesu Maria José !” exclaimed the girl behind him, crossing herself.

O never mind, continued the priest, never mind, it is all one now—and the dragoon devoured his *malassada*, and then drunk more of my precious Borba, and called for more cakes. He was unarmed, his sabre and pistols were on a table in the outer room—so I went and fetched him a basket of cakes, and placed it before him ; he then gave another kiss to Maria, and bade me go to bed or to h—, whichever was most convenient to me.

I thanked him for his politeness, but rather surprised him, when I drew out one of his pistols and cocked it in his face. The fellow turned pale with fear, and was about to call for assistance, when I quietly informed him that his companions were by this time in the same berth he had recommended me ; and now Maria

jumped up from the ruffian's knee and seizing a knife, would have stuck him like a Lamego hog* had I allowed it; but I bade her remain quiet, as I wished to treat my guest with hospitality.~ I therefore requested him to eat some more cakes, assuring him, that there was no poison in them. He ate one—two—three, half a dozen cakes, until he said that he could eat no more.

“ More cakes, *Monsieur*,” said I, “ or I’ll blow your brains out—or rather, for fear of alarming the neighbours, cut your whistle; so more cakes, if you please”—and, so saying, I handed him more cakes at the point of my knife; and he ate, nearly choaking at each swallow, a dozen more.

“ More cakes,” I exclaimed, “ you *filho da puta*, you are fond of cakes, are you? You shall have your belly full of them.”

“ *Pour l’amour de Dieu*,” said he, his face crimsoning, “ *je n’en puis plus*.”

“ More cakes, you *punhatero*—more cakes or the *faca*, the knife.”

* Lamego is celebrated for the excellence of its hams.

"*Miséricorde*," cried he, "one drop of wine—one drop of water. I'm choaking."

"More cakes, you *ladro*—no nonsense—you are fond of cakes—*filho de vinte-cinco pays*—more cakes!" He hesitated, I drove the cakes down his throat with the handle of my knife, like a gun rammer.

"*Pitié! pitié! oh mon Dieu!*"

"More cakes—ah! you like aunt's cakes! she is a capital pastry-cook!" and in I crammed another mouthful until I found that he was so loaded that he could not bear another charge; and now his bull head face became livid, the veins of his temples were swollen and turgid to bursting, he could scarcely draw his villainous breath, the white of his eyes was now turning up and then their lurid balls rolled as though they were about to start from their socket; he stretched forth his murderous arms, clenched his demoniac talons, struggled for aid and life, when his caitiff blood gushed from his foul mouth and nostrils and he rolled down apoplectic, and died at my feet. *Viva!* said I to Maria,

I'm a capital pastry-cook. There was no time to be lost; I dragged the heavy bullock to the window and threw him into the garden. I then proceeded to toss him into the cistern to sweeten the water for his comrades who would arrive the following morning.

I now went to see how my other guests were proceeding, and opening the door, found three of them as dead as the door nails; the fourth was still gasping for life, groaning '*Oh mon Dieu! mon Dieu!*' and piteously imploring divine aid. He appeared to be in great agony, and as I was always of a humane disposition, I generously took my knife and gently drew it across the blasphemer's wind-pipe.*

I had always observed that French soldiers are very familiar with their officers and oftentimes would hob nob and junket together, so I thought that it would be kind not to

* The incidents of this revolting account are unfortunately founded on well known facts, and may tend to show the deadly hatred that pervaded the minds of both Spaniards and Portuguese.

separate them, so with some little labour I pitched them all into the deep cistern which was nearly overflowing with its precious contents, as I whistled a *de profundis*. *Viva!* said I, the companions of these fellows will sing out miracle to-morrow, for when they seek for *water*, they will find *soup*—Frenchman's broth—*caldo de filhos de puta*—soup and bouilli. So having done this job, I awoke neighbour Joze, told him to rout up the few inhabitants who had not fled that they might quit the village at dawn of day. I shewed them the way, and here I am. *Porra!* am I not a good pastry-cook—a good cook—white arsenic—my aunt's cakes and Frenchman's broth—hurrah!

Having concluded his tale he spurred on his mule, and galloped away amidst roars of laughter, leaving his companions in misfortune to enjoy what vengeance considered an amusing and delightful story.

Massena was now advancing in full force to concentrate his army at Vizeu, having re-

ceived orders from Napoleon *to attack vigorously, after having observed well where to strike, and then to drive the English into the sea.* For some time Wellington was not certain where this decisive blow was to be struck, until the French had crossed the Criz ; and then the heights of Busaco were selected as their stand by the British troops. Hill and Leith had joined the main body of the army, and this formidable position was crowned by the united British and Portuguese forces.

The Serra de Busaco is a branch of the Estrella chain ; its situation is most picturesque, and from its rugged summit, no less than seven bishoprics can be discerned, bounded by the blue lines of the Estrella, Castello Rodrigo, Minde, Marvão and Grigo mountains. Here, surrounded by groves of the Lusitanian cypress, (first brought from Goa and planted in this very spot,) stands the Benedictine convent, founded to consecrate the memory of Sublaco a holy man, who once dwelt in a cave still hallowed and visited by pilgrims. Beautiful gardens surround the monastery of the bare-

footed Carmelites, and the botanist may find on these rocks an ample harvest of curious plants.

The monks had fled their sainted cloisters, and the soldiery now bivouacked around the venerable pile in anxious expectation of a conflict which might have decided the fate of Portugal.

On the 27th of September the dawn of day was beautiful: golden and fiery streaks broke through the deep azure of the eastern horizon and soon lighted up in refulgent beams the bright arms of the advancing foe glistening through rising clouds of dust, and extending for miles like a gathering storm over the green plains of Mortagão.

The advance of these troops was rapid and appalling; thousands of voltigeurs preceded the ponderous columns. Wellington himself, with the 52nd and 95th under Barclay and Beckwith, a body of horse, and Ross's horse-artillery endeavoured to check the torrent, but on it rolled like a cataract in overwhelming fury, and soon forty thousand of the veteran soldiers of France were crossing the dark

wooded ravine which separated us from their army, and with shouts of anticipated victory ascended the bold height with undaunted energy.

Three columns under the intrepid Ney moved upon the convent. Regnier with two other divisions bore upon the right of our position ; and, despite the fire of our guns that tore up their dense masses, were soon in possession of the height ; our 3rd division was broken ; the enemy was mingled with our confused troops ; when Wellington sent to their aid the 45th, 88th and 8th Portuguese commanded by Mead, Wallace, and Douglas, who furiously charging the staggered assailants precipitated them down the height that they had so nobly won.

At this period another column of the enemy, concealed not only by the shelving rocks they had bravely carried but by a cumulating cloud that capped the hills, were making a desperate stand ; but Leith hastened to turn the fearful balance of victory : he moved the 38th on the enemy's right, while Cameron, during a fearful musketry, rushed on with

the 9th and drove down the veteran legions at the bayonet point in confusion and dismay.

On the left the work of blood was carried on with equal fury. The enemy was overwhelming Crawford ; but the 43rd and 52nd, drawn out in front of the monastery, while the 3rd Portuguese Caçadores occupied the overhanging rocks, received with steadiness the terrific attack of Simon's grenadiers. Three shouts were given—the enemy was started ; a terrific volley was then poured in upon them at five yards' distance, our cannon and musketry converging on their flanks ; and they fled precipitately down the rugged steep.

Eight hundred French bodies were scattered over the mountains ! Foy and Merle were wounded, Graindorge slain, Simon a prisoner, and about 4,200 of Massena's finest troops had fallen ! A tacit suspension of arms enabled both armies to collect their wounded ; when on a sudden in this short pause in the deadly conflict, all eyes were fixed upon the rugged road that led to our position through the French lines.

A lovely Portuguese girl—a poor orphan—

barefooted — bare-headed — was seen driving before her, her tottering and affrighted *burrico** laden with all that she could gather in her humble abode, and seeking refuge amongst *us* in presence of the very enemy from whom she fled !

French and English gazed upon the interesting maid with amazement, as on a Jeanne d'Arc of modern times. She was winding her hurried path through masses of the dead and the dying ; no one stopped her progress, she seemed like the apparition of some sainted and invulnerable being calmly smiling in the storm and in the battle—when the din of war had even scared the eagles and the vultures from their eyrie, and the ravenous crows and ravens hovered afar until the strife had ceased, to pounce upon their prey.

With what shouts, what *vivas* did her countrymen receive the daring maiden ! She was unknown to them all—yet, they embraced her in raptures and bathed her with their tears—she was the incarnation of that national spirit, that could kindle desperate courage

* Donkey.

even in the bosom of a helpless child of misery. She was breathless and exhausted ; but she was amongst her kindred—no longer heard the discordant language of an enemy—the unknown tongue of the stranger. She fell upon her knees on rocks crimsoned with her country's blood, and returned thanksgivings to *Maria das Pênas* !*

This day her countrymen had vied with their British companions in arms for the palm of victory ; such was their determined bravery in repelling their hated invaders, that Massena, in a subsequent order of the day, assured his troops, that they were English soldiers dressed in Portuguese uniform to deceive them into a dangerous security ! For Esling had told them that the British were but a small body of men and the national force raw levies, undisciplined and contemptible.

Massena had thus been taught that our position was impregnable, and therefore, resolved to turn Wellington's left by crossing the heights of Caramula, and descending into

* Mary of affliction.

the plains of Boyalva. Nature and art combined as it were to mask his movements, for dense September mists hung over his columns, while bodies of light troops kept their ground and occupied us by constant skirmishes: yet, from the culminating crests of Busaco, we soon discovered their chequered legions dipping beyond the horizon. On the 29th the position was abandoned, and our troops were in full march towards the lines of *Torres Vedras*, which were reached on the 9th of October.

Our left, under Hill, was cantoned in the village of Alhandra—once a lovely place of resort for pleasure-parties, who, quitting the loathsome streets of Lisbon enjoyed the fresh breeze of the Tagus and the orange-bowers of Alhandra's groves! Now it was deserted; not a human being was found to receive our advanced-guard, either with a smile of satisfaction in beholding liberators, or a scowl of sullen displeasure in receiving unwelcome friends—for, alas! in war, friends are as great a curse as foes, perfectly illustrating the appellation the

French gave to the army of occupation, whom they styled *nos amis les ennemis* !

All was silent as we marched in and entered the abandoned houses ; cats were the only living beings remaining, wild and ravenous—whom hunger had undomesticated and who, resuming their natural feline character, prowled about in search of food—impatient—furious. Their destruction soon commenced ; the Portuguese followers of the army made messes of their carcases that might have vied in flavour with a *salmi de lièvre* of many a French auberge, that British tourists would think delicious ; while their skins black, white, tortoiseshell or brindled, were soon converted into warm caps by the industrious soldiery.

There does not exist a race of men more skilful in every craft than soldiers : they *make* every thing they possess. I well remember the wife of a worthy English officer in Lisbon, who once expressed her admiration of a curious brass lamp brought in by her servant.

“ John,” she exclaimed, “ where did you get that beautiful thing ? ”

"Please your honour, I made it."

"Bless me, I did not think you were so clever. Why, John, what a fool you were to *list*; to be sure—a workman like you might have made a fortune." John had unhooked the said lamp with his profane hands from a shrine of the Virgin at the corner of the street; and be it therefore known to civilians, that in military parlance, *making* meaneth breaking the eighth injunction of the *Decalogue*, for which it is grievous to say that men of war show as little respect as my reader might profess for an auctioneers' old catalogue.

The advanced-guard of the French had entered Villa Franca, and both parties proceeded to strengthen their position, as the enemy plainly perceived by our attitude that they had *brought us up*.

Barricades were thrown across the entrance of Alhandra. A barricade is a curious thing—a strange collection: here were piled up carts, carriages and broken wagons, bedsteads that had once been the welcome of pleasurable repose or the dismal couch of

racking ailments!—pianos on which the taper fingers of a Lusitanian maiden had once accompanied a tender *modinha*—clocks that but a few days before had summoned the cheerful family to repose, or to the luxurious *sesta*—to the church or to the ball—to the confessional or the grave—the penance or the sin :—all now were gathered in rude heaps!

And in the houses! though all was desolate and silent, yet every scattered object spoke volumes—tales of worldly vicissitudes—stories of religion and of love! On the little toilet of the *menina's** chamber, now stripped of looking-glass and pincushion, and its embroidered cover, were still to be found the empty pomatum pot, the rubbed-out saucer of artificial yet concealing blushes—the ribands that once her anxious hands had bound round the knot of raven hair—the bunches of the golden immortal that had once relieved the ebon tresses, luxuriating in wild undulations upon a brown swan's neck, or shading the lovely cheek, which, al-

* Young maiden.

though tinged by the warm sun of a burning clime, allowed a crimson glow to display the still warmer feelings of the heart. And from the altars of their household gods!—the sainted images had been borne away; still there was left the sacred cup yet holding a holy fluid—the bunch of myrtle and of box with which the lustral water had been sprinkled—with loose beads of rosaries, and broken crosses! Then the tiny bits of a fond letter from the absent soldier, torn into fragments with many a bitter tear!—fragments on which the curious but profane eye could only read the delicious words of *minha vida — saudades—coração —* while in a corner lay a bull of the *cruzada*, permitting the indulgence of eggs and butter in Lent—with a printed prayer for *as Almas*, surmounted with a rude coloured delineation of naked souls in purgatory, clasping their suppliant hands in the midst of gamboge and vermilion flames for celestial relief, from angels, perched on prussian-blue clouds; and here and there a shattered fan—and balls of silk and cotton—and spangles—and chenille—and the



trodden down little satin shoe that had once covered the still smaller foot, now perhaps lacerated by the rude rocky roads the fugitives had to tread! Oh! if the sight of monumental splendour and architectural glories can fire the enthusiastic mind—how much more eloquent are ruins: the chalice of pleasure is more precious when dashed to atoms at our feet, than when we raised it in raptures to our lips!

On a hill commanding the high road, stood the picturesque church of the town; its Gothic roof which once resounded with pious strains and the hoarse notes of the serpent, now re-echoed loud revelry and blaspheming tumult. Every thing was desecrated by impious hands which seemed to have prided themselves in their iconoclastic work by the display of impious frolics. The solemn organ was thumped in wild mimicry, until the merry blower had actually burst the Æolian aid; while the pulpit, where once the bearded capuchin had *bearded* his congregation trembling in a transient religious awe, was now occupied by a mummer, who entertained his comrades with

ludicrous and obscene paraphrases — while half-drunken Irishmen, forgetting that they were defiling the temple of their own saints, in fragments of surplice, and of stole and simar, were bellowing out in mock latin the sacrifice of the mass. Here stood a wooden image of St. John, with a grenadier cap on his head, a short pipe stuck in his mouth, with a pouch and bayonet belts over his shoulders; and there was St. Peter, his *vis-à-vis* with a straw bonnet of a soldier's wife cocked on his golden halo, with a dozen of canteens slung round his neck—cherubims bearing camp-kettles — seraphims holding frying-pans! while mustachios were bountifully bestowed on all the holy personages of the many paintings that decorated the aisles; missals were torn to wrap up bacon, and fires were kindled with the ponderous volumes of church-men's lore!

Alas! it was then that one might have exclaimed with Southern:—

“ All the dire calamities
Of raging war, chained up in discipline,
Are now broke loose—to fright the world.”

Our officers and men were quartered in every house; those occupied by the former were soon made comfortable by the construction of fire-places in the dwelling-rooms, a luxury unknown to the Portuguese inhabitants of country towns, and the most commodious halls were selected for purposes of conviviality.

It was in one of these spacious chambers, paved with tessellated marble and refreshed with an ever-flowing fountain, that several officers of the — brigade established a mess. The gloomy evenings hung heavily upon every one, and over the cigar and the bowl, or the jug of the old yellow wine of Oporto,* the joke, and the song went round; but these were soon exhausted, during the long winter nights, Joe Miller having been thumbed from alpha to omega. It was therefore decided that every member of the society should endeavour to

* In England a most erroneous prejudice has lately prevailed in regard to Port wines, which are supposed to have lost their qualities when becoming tawny, whereas this pale colour is the characteristic of all *good* Port wines of any age.

vary the monotony of inaction by the recital of some adventure, either of war or of love ; for as Shakspeare has justly said :—

“ May that soldier a mere recreant prove,
Who means not, hath not, or is not in love.”

A difficulty now arose as to who should begin, when an old major, (Major Rumford), who had often boasted of his amorous adventures, in one of which he had received a shot in the cheek, which halted his double quick step under Cupid's banner, by sadly disfiguring his once fascinating looks, was unanimously called upon to begin the series.

The major, who was a fund of amusement to the *youngsters* from his ramrod rigidity and inflexibly systematic mode of living, was ever ridiculing the passionate effusion of the amorous officers, observing :—

“ If they had been used as scurvily as I have been by the damnable fair sex,” as he called it, “ they would cut and run the moment a petticoat ‘ hove in sight ;’ ” for be it known to civilians, that soldiers are of an

amphibious nature, and ever and anon will indulge in nautical phraseology. He gladly consented to meet the wishes of his messmates. A flowing bowl of punch was brewed—fresh cigars lighted—the fire was “reinforced” with a broken chair—a Dutch doll—an image of St. Anthony—a cuckoo clock, and chips of a barber’s block—and every one drew round the crackling hearth to hear the worthy veteran’s adventures. He had been forty-five years in his Majesty’s service and had now attained the rank of brevet major, a rank, which despairing to outstep, he considered the proudest in the service, and he looked upon the stars on his epaulettes as a constellation outshining in terrestrial glory all the splendour of the firmament. He thus commenced his narrative.

MAJOR RUMFORD.

My father was an adjutant—my mother a soldier's daughter and grand-daughter. I was born in a camp, and I verily might have boasted with Rattan, in the play of the "Bee Hive," of having been cradled on a gun-carriage, and fed out of a mortar-ladle. I never belied my origin. The very maladies and accidents that attended my childhood were marked with a military character; at three years old, I was blown up by lighting a cartridge—a year after, I was wounded by one of my father's pistols, which unfortunately in illustration of the Irish song:—

' Did bend on myself the wrong end,'

and at six, I was nearly dying with a scarlet fever. The only music that delighted my young ear was the drum, the fife and the bugle;



and when our drummers were practising their "*daddy mammy*," I looked upon them as the most privileged members of society, justly authorised to make a deuce of a noise in the world.

According to laudable custom, first established in our army by the Royals, or 1st Foot, when they were Pontius Pilate's guards, I was borne on the books of the regiment, and before I had cut my teeth, had obtained the half rations of a soldier. I grew rapidly on this allowance, and gradually became so useful that the greatest political economist would not have grudged me the "King's own" that was served out to me.

My father taught me how I was to listen at the door of certain officers' barrack-rooms, while I pretended to be playing at marbles on the stair-head, and duly to report to him all that my eves-dropping industry had collected, that the said information might be duly submitted to the commander of the regiment for the welfare of his Majesty's service.

It is true that when this secret service

was detected, I was duly kicked and buffeted ; but the lieutenant-colonel promised my father an ensigncy for me ; and as hard blows form part of a soldier's prospects, I only considered those that I received as an anticipation of future honours. My vexation however soon ceased.

There were two parties in the corps : the one formed by the commanding officer, the adjutant (my father), the paymaster, the quarter-master, and sundry officers who looked up to their influence for promotion. Their opponents were several independent captains and impertinent subs, who presumed to think. These officers were very judiciously submitted to all sorts of tribulations and annoyances, and were soon compelled to quit the regiment. My enemies were thus expelled.

The wife of the commanding officer was also my particular friend. I executed all her messages, told her all that the officers' wives whom she did not visit, said of her. My mother, moreover, nursed her and her children when they were indisposed, assisted when they had com-

pany, and I was also frequently charged with messages to the surgeon who invariably attended her, when the lieutenant-colonel was out, either on duty or at the mess, when in order to conciliate his favourable opinion in his confidential reports, he was encouraged to keep it up till all was blue. During this absence, his affectionate wife, who was fearful that his constitution might be injured by these excesses, was most miserable, and every moment attacked with spasms that required the constant attendance of Dr. O'Finnikin ; moreover, by remaining with her, the Doctor was not exposed to the temptations of the mess, and was therefore better able to afford professional aid to her husband, should he return home indisposed.

Thus did I grow up in favour, and I may say in figure, for I was considered one of the best-looking chaps in the regiment ; and Robert or Bob by name, I was cut out a *light bob* by nature ; born for desultory operations, I was skirmishing all day, and thrashing the blackguard boys about the barracks,

and on Sundays invariably was marauding about the country. On these expeditions, I displayed so much daring ingenuity, that a German bandsman swore that I ought to have been a Cossack, a Hulan or a Pandour, as I always seemed to be impressed with the notions of a celebrated French marshal, that the inhabitants of a country are only entitled to the superfluity of the army.

This clever disposition was displayed in a singular degree while we were quartered in Norfolk, where I collected about our cantonment, turkeys enough to supply my father's and the colonel's table—each fat alderman being duly bound in chains, manufactured by my excellent mother, who excelled every officer's wife in pickling, preserving, potting, and making mould candles. The manner in which I obtained these birds was somewhat curious. I abhorred theft, but was proud of a little gambling, so I used to go and play a game of beggar-my-neighbour with some turkeys, reared by a comfortable farmer. For this purpose, I carried to his orchard a pack of cards and

a loaf of bread, and when I had fully ascertained that all the inmates of the farm were out, I assembled my partners by drawing them into a thick grove with crumbs of bread. Securely seated under the shade of an ancient beech tree, surrounded by my noisy companions, I cut with them for deal, and began the game, which I played with as much fairness as any member of our fashionable clubs. When I lost, I threw bread to the winner most liberally, and they seemed convinced of my honesty by the kind manner in which they acknowledged it, and their avidity in swallowing up their winnings; but when fortune favoured me, and I turned up a better card, I politely shewed it to my partner, and giving him a gentle twist of the neck, I bagged him, and walked home.

Like all gamesters, these confounded turkeys were not discouraged by the losses they witnessed; and despite my entreaties, they would follow me, requesting me, no doubt, to continue the game, and not to walk off with my winnings, (for fair play is a jewel,

even among turkeys.) I always disliked being seen among black legs, and such I considered most gamblers, and I therefore with stick and stone, would endeavour to rid myself of these troublesome fellows. Notwithstanding this precaution, they would hop and cackle after me; more especially one villainous cock, who I am sure knew how to *faire sauter le coup* as he invariably won my bread. This *mauvais sujet* was the loudest in his clamorous complaints, and seemed resolved to expose me to the playing world. The farmer, who every Sunday perceived that he was a turkey *minus*, took into his irreligious head one sabbath day to stay from church, and watch his flock; he saw me steal into the wood followed by these sharpers, and was curious enough to conceal himself behind a clump of trees. I had just cut with an inexperienced pullet, quite a green horn, and I really felt for its *tender* years when I turned up a king to his knave, and I was reluctantly going to take up my trick, when the crack of a massive horsewhip, accompanied with the furious cry:

'*Ha! you young scoundrel, have I caught you at last?*' made me jump up in horrible terrors, which were only the harbinger of a volley of lashes, so dexterously administered, that they would have put a most expert drummer to the blush.

I verily think that the savage would have put an end to my existence, had I not saved my life by an ingenious expedient. I recognised in my executioner, the person who supplied our regiment with contract meat, and therefore falling at his feet I implored for mercy, telling him that I was the quarter-master's son. This information acted as powerfully as a royal respite; the brute altered his manners, took me home with him, gave me a shilling, a glass of gooseberry wine and a cake, and accompanied me to the barracks to apologize for the mistake he had committed, and our quarter-master, to whom I made a significant sign when I called him *papa*, was agreeably surprised at receiving a five-pound note, after which it was agreed over a glass of toddy, that two thirds of the *wethers* killed

for the regiment should be ewes. The mess and hospital alone were to contrive to receive wether mutton, and from that day I observed that the commanding officer and quarter-master had a roast quarter of lamb for dinner twice in the week. It is true that complaints about the quality of the meat were frequently made, but the impertinent rascals were told they were a mutinous set of vagabonds who did not know a B from a bull's foot, although they presumed to discriminate between wether and ewe mutton, and cow meat and grass beef. One insolent fellow was daring enough to call the quarter-master *cag-mag*, for which he was tried, and received four hundred lashes.

This prudent and conciliating step effectually stopped the spirit of insubordination. Nothing can be more absurd or detrimental to the service than feeding soldiers too well; it renders them unfit to bear the privations to which they must occasionally be exposed, and moreover tends to demoralize troops upon active service, since, if they are spoiled by good living, they will be apt to plunder when put upon short




commons. The commissaries of our armies have always displayed much sagacity in this matter, and they found that the best bullocks for the soldiers' wholesome diet, were those that could no longer drag along their carts and waggons, and who were humanely slaughtered to save their lives.

At the age of fourteen, I received my commission ; the quarter-master generously presenting me with all my appointments. On this occasion, we had feasting for at least a week. At first I was delighted with my situation, but I soon found myself uncomfortable. I had been brought up in the regiment as a boy, and although I was now a " trusty and beloved " officer in his Majesty's land forces, yet my comrades could not consider me their equal. They still longed to thump me for what they presumed to consider an impertinent freedom ; but although they might have conceived themselves authorised to pummel the wearer, they did not dare to lay hands on the cloth I wore.

A little jealousy, I must confess, tainted

to indispose them still more against me. I was, as I have already observed, rather good looking. The colonel's wife and daughter had taught me to dance, and were now frequently disposed to foot it with their pupil. In short, I now became a ladies' man. We were quartered in Ireland, and I was indefatigable in walking out the *garrison hacks* in the morning, and playing at cards at *teas and turn outs*, and *ghosts* in the evening. The scandal-monger of the place, I was in universal request, and being a good hand at making conundrums, guessing riddles, varnishing gimcracks—and teaching tricks to young ladies, I was considered an accomplished person.

I had, moreover, carried off a milliner's apprentice, who was afterwards married to a major of militia who paid all the debts his lady had made me contract. An action for damages had been brought against me for knocking down a fire-eating Irishman, who had spat in his wife's face. £500 damages were awarded by twelve married men, as a remuneration to the injured husband. This *ad va-*



lorem duty had been liquidated by a handsome widow. I had fought three duels—wounding two of my adversaries ; kicked an undutiful father down stairs for forbidding my visits to his daughter ; thrashed three Irish brothers, who wished me to marry their sisters ; was arrested for debt, and remained three months in gaol, whence at the expense of the sheriff, the gaoler allowed me to escape, to rid himself of my dangerous influence with his pretty though somewhat elderly wife, who was equally anxious to restore me to freedom, as I had captivated her handsome daughter.

It is needless to add, that after all these adventures, I became a general pet of the petticoats. My brother officers detested me ; but brave as they were, they dreaded me, for instead of avoiding quarrels, I sought them, always taking great care not to be the aggressor.

My love-adventures were so numerous, that I used to notch them on the wooden chimney-piece of my barrack-rooms ; each mark varying, as my innamorata were maids, wives or widows. The barrack-damages I

had to pay for, these notches were as incredible as those that I incurred for driving nails in the walls to hang up portraits, or scratching on the window panes, the names of my beloved.

It may naturally be concluded, that thus circumstanced, I never thought of marriage; in fact, my adventures puzzled me more than a clubbed regiment of militia would have done. A favourite with the ladies and my commander, I cared little for the other officers; but my situation was soon materially altered. The Colonel was promoted and left us; and my father obtained a company in another regiment. Our quarter-master having realised a tolerable independence, became a brewer; and the paymaster was ruined from having indulged the colonel's coterie, while he would not have advanced a shilling to any other individual to save him from hanging. I was then left with no other protection than my courage and my 'marking irons.'

Our new lieutenant-colonel was a bachelor, remarkably handsome, according to some ideas (but I never thought him so); he was

also a great favourite with the ladies, and having a tolerable fortune in addition to his pay, he attempted to cut me out in every direction where I had taken root. It was a bold attempt, but with a golden sickle the most unyielding plants may be levelled to the ground. He abhorred me;—I hated him. His conquests made him detested by all those ladies who had not been selected as the object of his attentions, and my allies became as numerous as they were vindictive. The world was not large enough for us both. We were two suns in one horizon. He, therefore, ordered me on recruiting duty; but a more melancholy fate awaited me.

Colonel Beauchamp, (that was the name of my rival,) was one of those bragging coxcombs, who lost sight of that principle which should ever be the guide of every man of honour, never to kiss and tell, and he basely boasted at the mess of his successful amours.

["Why, Major," interrupted one of the listening party, "you only just now told us that *you* used to notch your conquests on your chimney piece."

That was to refresh my memory, I replied.

“ And to scratch their names on the windows,” rejoined a second.

Ay, their christian names as mementos.

“ And hang their portraits round your barrack-room,” exclaimed a third.

Those were drawings of my own, from recollection, I remarked.

“ Then the ladies’ reputation was no doubt secure.”]

Though this conduct on the part of Colonel Beauchamp, resumed the Major, did not disconcert me, I nevertheless resolved to seize the first opportunity of mortifying him. A circumstance soon occurred that enabled me to expose his impertinence and his falsehoods. He would invariably relate his adventures with marchionesses, and lady this and lady that, until one day, he swore that he had refused the hand of Mademoiselle d’Eon, tendered to him by the Prince of Wales, with a splendid fortune. Now it so happened, that in that very day’s paper, the death of that singular personage was recorded, when Mlle. d’Eon turned out to be M. le Chevalier d’Eon. I quitted the mess-room, with a contemptuous smile, and

soon after returned with the publication in question, which I read aloud to the company.

The roars of laughter that followed this perusal were as gratifying to me as they proved mortifying to Colonel Beauchamp, who, in a fit of unbridled passion, forgot himself so far as to throw the contents of the glass before him in my face, muttering the offensive words "insolent coxcomb!" I knew too well the respect I owed to my commanding officer to strike him—so I only threw a decanter at him. He instinctively bobbed his head, and my missile hit an old major, who was about to leave the mess-room. In his blind fury, (for both his eyes were closed by the wound) he threw a knife at me, which slightly wounded me. It was from this little incident, that the current joke about us arose—that I would crack a bottle with any one, while every one was disposed to cut me.

Although my superior, Beauchamp well knew that his conduct entitled me to demand satisfaction, and I obtained it most completely. The next morning at day break we went out,

and I had the misfortune to receive his ball in the cheek, fracturing the jaw and knocking out five of my precious teeth. This, gentlemen, is the unsightly scar that has ever since marked me. I cared not for my sufferings—I cared not for the dangers of my wound; but the thoughts of being disfigured for life, were horrible beyond expression. Had I lost an arm, one would still have been left to cast round a pretty woman's neck. Had I lost a leg, I could have stumped about the parade as gaily as ever; but to behold features on which so many lovely eyes had gazed in delight, now distorted and hideous, was a terrible sight.

[Here the major was interrupted in his story by his emotion; the youngsters jocosely comforted him, by assuring him, that he still possessed a fascinating *je ne sais quoi*. Drinking off a scalding tumbler of toddy, therefore, the Major proceeded to recount the second period of his life.]

I was now obliged to quit the regiment. After six months' bodily sufferings with six centuries of painful thoughts, I was able

to join another corps, stationed in one of my old Irish quarters. Judge what were my feelings when I beheld the walks where once I tripped and flirted with delight—the parade round which I used to march in ordinary and double quick with pride and glory—when every woman returned my salute with such pleasure that I might have saluted them all round when *off guard*—now, none seemed to recognise me; and all to shun me; when known, alas! the only comfort that greeted my ear was:—“Oh dear! who would have known him again?” “Lord, what a fright!” “Well, he’s got pinked at last,” exclaimed a third. “Serve him right,” rejoined a fourth old maid. “This comes from galivanting.” “The devil mend him!” retorted a simpering dame, whom I recollected to have once left in the middle of a country-dance in search of a sylph that flitted by. Oh, it was then that I bitterly repented that I had not married the handsomest of the pack!

My miseries can be more easily imagined than described. However, I soon after got a company in a veteran battalion, and by the death

of an old uncle, who turned up from India, I became possessed of one hundred pounds a year. I ought now to have been satisfied; but my evil genius prompted me to seek for a wife. My hearth was disconsolate—my hours endless—a wife, thought I, will enable me to put up with my misfortunes; she will be obliged by every law, human and divine, to bear me with all my infirmities—for better for worse; for it is a fact, that what the world maliciously called my ugliness, improved my health. I kept early hours—was no longer exposed to the wear and tear of love, whose jealous fears will disturb the wisest. I determined, therefore, to get married; left off studying the army list, and took to reading magazines and sentimental poems—knowing the all-powerful influence of intellect. Yet I did not forget to repair to the most fashionable tailor (the rascally Beauchamp had left my figure unimpaired); I also sported a knowing hat, a peculiar cut of the hair, and a pair of Hoby's best hessians. Ruspini had taken my jaws in hand, and I did not despair.

For ten years did I frequent every water-

ing-place where wall-flowers were planted. I might have married—often, but remembrance of the past made me fastidious. I still sought some little beauty; moreover, I had so often deceived that I dreaded retaliation. I had now attained my forty-fourth year, but suffered from gout and rheumatism. Hoby could no longer fit me, and Stultz declined my person; but I was a major, and that rank, I thought, might account for my increasing bulk.

I was not wealthy enough to hunt—rather too heavy to shoot—and therefore, occasionally sought a little fishing. When seated on the banks of a trout stream, my rod in hand, and Ovid's *Art of Love* by my side, I sought a nibble—perhaps a relish for my dinner, at any rate some food for the mind, to assist my suit in the *oyez et terminez* court of matrimony.

It was during one of these angling excursions in Berkshire that I chanced to take up my residence in the house of a veteran who took in lodgers. The appearance of the premises was inviting: a garden plot surrounded by a neat grove led to the entrance,

shaded with mingled branches of honeysuckles and jessamines, while luxuriant ivy seemed to vie in antique appearance with the red bricks of the old dwelling. But, must I confess my foible? the greatest attraction then, was a lovely girl, whom I had observed employing herself in watering some geraniums, at her latticed window. She was young, and therefore wished naturally, I fancied, to get married. Her father let lodgings in a dreary part of the country, therefore his circumstances must be indifferent. I was a field officer with one hundred pounds a year besides my pay, therefore I might have some chance; my hopes beamed brighter as I tapped at the door which was opened by the damsel, who received me with an engaging simper although she looked me full in the face.

“ You have lodgings to let, my sweet girl,” I said with one of my former smiles.

“ Yes, Sir,” replied the maiden, dropping a slight curtesy.

Observing an old halbert hanging over the parlour chimney, and concluding that the land-

lord must have once sported it, I thought this circumstance still more favourable, and asked if the owner of the house was in the army?

"Yes, Sir, a sergeant in, I forget what number; I only recollect he was bombarded at Gibraltar."

"I am a soldier too, I added, a major in the army." The timid girl, at hearing my rank, curtsied still lower with becoming respect.

"I am fond of fishing, now and then, when I can steal away from a pleasant fire-side. Is fish abundant here?" continued I.

"Oh plenty, Sir; in the mackerel season we get three for a penny."

I smiled at her ingenuousness. "I mean trout—fresh water fish, my dear."


"Oh plenty of that too, Sir; my father often goes out along the stream. Sometimes he catches flounders and sometimes dabs; then I catch it when he comes home."

I thought her either very unsophisticated or a quizz; but her innocent looks made me incline to the former opinion. By this time

I had entered the neat little parlour. To my surprise, I saw a piano in the corner, several drawings hung round the room, music scattered about, and various books upon the table—one of them was open. I stole a hasty glance at it; it was Pope's *Heloisa and Abelard*. I had never read it, but from what I had heard of the poem, I thought it was rather odd reading for a country girl. I was glad, however, to find that she *could* read—she might read hereafter to me.

How the deuce, thought I, could the father of such a girl let out lodgings on a dreary roadside — 'twas an evident proof of her virtue. I always fancied that virtue could only be found in a cottage.

Fanny (that was the gipsy's name) appeared to me more attractive than any girl I had hitherto seen. Perhaps it was now a novelty. The poetry she sang so sweetly had a wonderful effect upon me; true, I had read the verses, but to tell you frankly, I did not quite understand them. Rhyming always appeared crabbed, besides hitherto the effec-



tive strength of my library had consisted of His Majesty's rules and regulations, the articles of war, the manual and platoon, with the eighteen manœuvres described by the immortal Dundas, who was in my mind a much greater general than all your Cæsars, and your Alexanders, and your Wat Tylers, and your Ciceros, and all those old generals who never smelt gunpowder. The new reading I had taken to, in order to ornament my mind, sadly puzzled me, for in fact I knew enough. When a man has attained the high rank of major, and read all the works sent by the adjutant-general with the daily papers and the gazette, he need know no more.

Tomlinson, Fanny's father, soon came in. He was a Chelsea out-pensioner on a shilling a day, which was not overpaid, since he had lost a leg and an arm in the service. The moment he heard I was a major, he took off his hat with due respect, saluted like a soldier of the good old times, and when he learnt from his daughter that I was in search of lodgings, expressed his delight in 'quartering me;' an expression which made his monkey of a girl titter.

I was immediately installed in a comfortable room, hung round with battles and sieges, the History of the Prodigal Son, and Faith, Hope, and Charity, with two Cupids on the chimney and a cuckoo clock in the corner.

My host was an excellent cook: he reminded me of former times in preparing *lobscouse, salamagundy, twice laid, three deckers, sea-pies*, and the various luxuries that diversify a transport's diet. I now learnt that Fanny had been placed by a lady of the neighbourhood, a general's widow, at a boarding-school to receive an education that would qualify her to become a governess for young ladies. This accounted for those accomplishments so rarely found in persons of her rank.

But I soon discovered also that she was a very devil; and I could not but think that she sometimes tried to mystify me. Knowing that a man of my rank must have seen a deal of the world, she would ask me information of the most curious nature that often put me deucedly out.

Besides she was up to all sorts of tricks

like a Gibraltar ape ; she would put salt in my grog, grease on my boots, and chopped horse-hair in my bed ; and, what was more cruel than anything else, one day when I sported a pair of white leathers beautifully pipe-clayed by her father, she put cobbler's wax on my chair and stuck me to my seat in a most ridiculous manner. It is true, her father threatened to disinherit her for taking such liberties with an officer of my rank ; but indignant as I was, love made me advocate her cause and pacify the justly incensed veteran. Notwithstanding her malicious conduct, I every day felt that I was more and more attached to her, and at last actually proposed for her.

The old soldier was enraptured at the thought of having his daughter married to a major ! an honour that his ambition never contemplated ; yet, to his utter surprise and to my amazement, the impertinent minx rejected the proffered distinction—nay, in my very hearing ; for I was in the adjoining room. Tomlinson's fury was such, that he seized his rusty old halbert, and I verily believe would have

come to the charge, had I not rushed in and obliged him to ground arms. Notwithstanding my lenity, the impertinent minx called me an ugly old fogrum—only think of that!—a major in His Majesty's service '*a fogrum*!' yet such was my infatuation that I persisted in my suit, till at last the wicked wretch had recourse to open hostilities.

One day when I was going out fishing, just as I had reached the bottom of the stairs, I heard her, from the top of the house cry '*Bo-peep.*' There is something so bewitching in the voice of her we love, that despite of my vexation I looked up, and she forthwith let fly at me from the garret-loft a heavy boot-jack that inflicted a deep wound in my head, and knocked me down flat. I really think her father would now have put her to the sword, had she not run away in fits of laughter, and that very night eloped with her former dancing-master.

Such, gentlemen, was the result of my first matrimonial speculations. The offended pride of an officer of my rank induced me, for a long time,

to fly the sex ; but the loneliness of my condition became every day more irksome. I had thrown Ovid into the fire, and the army list was the only book that afforded me any entertainment. The very newspapers vexed me with their insertions of marriages that seemed forbidden to me. At last I took a trip to Bath, where I heard that I stood a better chance of picking and choosing.

On my arrival at that fashionable quarter, I established my lodgings in the house of a Mrs. Tinder, a widow, with two daughters who took in boarders. Here I fancied that I was fixed. A lonely widow who takes in boarders could not be independent, and I thought that a major in the army had but to throw his handkerchief. But I was puzzled in my choice ; Mrs. Tinder was still comely, although about forty, fresh and buxom. She had married at an early period of life, in consequence of which her fair daughters bloomed in all the fragrant luxury of spring, while their mother had scarcely attained the autumn of life.

It may be easily imagined that the three ladies, although united by the articles of a triple coalition in common warfare, had individual interests, each seeking some more permanent ally. This I soon discovered, when I had made my arrangement for lodging and boarding on a daily fare consisting of *omnium gatherum* soup, the last fish in the market, grilled bones and hashed up cold meats, with a *quantum suff.* of very small beer, which was profusely served round, and strongly recommended as a *fresh tap* whenever pease-soup, (a standing dish,) or pease-pudding were bountifully helped to the company.

There were two other boarders in the family whom I did not much like. One was a Mr. Sharp a music-master, who sat at the piano, and roared amatory songs and romances like a bull; shutting his eyes in a sort of ecstasy, like an expiring cod fish; and shrugging up his shoulders like a Frenchman stuck in a bog. What enraged me, however, still more, he was always *parlevouing* French and Italian to Miss Biddy, the eldest of the Tinders, who answered

him in a more elegant language, that reminded me of the '*shove off, John,*' or the '*nix de manjare,*' of the Maltese.*

Our second guest was a Mr. Teddy Murphy, a lieutenant of the Kerry militia, who talked of nothing but the lakes of Killarney, the Tralee assemblies, his duels and amours, and his father's hounds. I afterwards found that his worthy sire was a hair-dresser in Mill Street. He seemed to pay great attention to Miss Katty Tinder, the second daughter; but I observed, with no small degree of satisfaction, that they appreciated my rank, and in every thing evinced a preference by listening to all I said, laughing at my jokes, and sighing when I related a tale of woe; besides, they would fish the capers and oysters out of the sauce for me, when I had sent them in, on high days and holidays, to accompany a boiled leg of mutton or a rump steak; they would help me

* The *lingua Franca* of the mariners and lower orders in the Mediterranean is a jumble of various languages.

to the brown,—put more cream in my tea,—and were especially anxious to strengthen my potations—of course with my own liquor, for they were dead hands at mixing and tasting punch.

Biddy was a plump blonde, with rosy cheeks of the most delicate tinge, for the flitting emotions of her sensitive mind would cause the timid blush to vary continually in its depth ; sometimes totally disappearing, at others fading only partially. On these occasions she evinced (at least I thought so) a singular degree of delicacy, not wishing that strangers should read the working of the secret thoughts that agitated her bosom ; for so soon as the blush was succeeded by a pallid and interesting hue, at a nod of her mother, I observed that she would leave the room ; no doubt to collect her scattered thoughts, and shortly re-appear animated with a crimson glow that proclaimed how much she regretted that want of self-command which might have revealed to common eyes her sudden emotion.

Katty was of a different complexion. A

brunette with strongly marked features of a rigid character. Her aquiline nose seemed to peck at Biddy's Roxalana with sisterly affection, venturing to trespass upon the rights of primogeniture, when she indulged in occasional levity and laughed at my jokes. Biddy was fond of a little mirth, while Katty considered gaiety as unbecoming two fatherless girls, left under the sole protection of a lone widow, obliged to support her family by honest industry. Katty's cheeks possessed no transparency; she was firmly resolved that no prying eye should see through *her*. Her dark gazelle eyes formed a striking contrast with the celestial azure of those of Biddy, while deep-coloured rainbows over and under her orbits, indicated a concentrated mind, and a constant watchfulness in the arduous pursuit of matter of fact.

The occupations of the two sisters were as different as their temperaments. Biddy would employ her time in reading novels, copying music, writing sentimental poetry in her scrap

book, painting flowers with appropriate illustrations of floral loves and allegories, taking care, as all good botanists ought to do, to insert the name of every flower under it, for fear of mistake ; she would also make pasteboard witches who would tell fortunes when twirled round on a card, pen wipers, comforters and muffeteers for 'the gentlemen' in cold weather. She was also passionately fond of the drama, and would go to the theatre whenever Lieutenant Teddy Murphy could procure orders ; and on her return would repeat scrips and scraps with appropriate imitations, and would describe the motions of the dancers and other particulars with a correctness worthy of a painter.

At this period I was nearly laid up with the gout, or should otherwise have accompanied Bidly to the play ; for although in many things she reminded me of the hateful Fanny, yet her manners delighted me. I was not a little vexed, however, I must confess, when I perceived, that on play nights she came home with Mr. Murphy somewhat late, observing

that she was obliged to wait until the vulgar people had gone out, as crowds gave her desperate head-aches.

Katty's avocations were widely different. She devoured books of metaphysics, natural history and political economy. She would tell you the origin of all causes—describe the length of the tails of all the baboons and monkeys that were ever known, and tell you how to feed the poor at a cheap rate, to the very fraction of a grain of gruel. Then she would descant upon what she called instinctive propensities—the dictates of nature and of the internal senses—the inductive principle; in short, she would have bothered a posse of doctors. All that amazed me was her apparent partiality to Lieutenant Murphy, a fellow not fit to mend pens for her multifarious writings. But I have often observed that the learned like to have an ignorant companion, no doubt as a foil, for I am certain Mr. Murphy no more comprehended her than I did. I soon discovered, however, that he was fond

of the study of astronomy ; a science that Katty had also cultivated with much ardour; and I frequently remarked, that whether the night was as dark as pitch, or bright as noon day, the Kerry militia-man would put a huge telescope under his arm, and sally forth with the learned Miss Katty in search of what they called 'stellary conjunctions.'

Whenever the young ladies thus went out, the one to admire some London star at the play-house, and the other no doubt to enjoy some constellation in the sky, I was left *tête-à-tête* with the mother, whose name was Arabella.

The nights were cold; I was chilly, and my hospitable hostess was most earnest in mixing various comfortable beverages to warm the inward man; though the poor soul only drank peppermint by the advice of her medical attendant, who also recommended water as her usual potation; however, the Bath waters being bad, she was allowed to correct them with a little cordial.

Mrs. Tinder was a very pleasant woman: very loquacious, though guilty of occasional

mistakes from a neglected education in the wilds of Ireland, which gave her birth. One evening, after she had concocted a delicious brimmer of whisky punch for me, she fixed her eyes upon the fender, and then addressed me in a most winning yet modest manner :

“ I’m surprised, Major, that a gentleman the like of you, full of gumption, every inch of you, and who knows what ’s what, better than any one I know, should never have thought of mending your condition in life.”

“ Ah ! Mrs. Tinder,” I replied ; “ I have done so—but too late ; for my mending then was like the Banbury tinker, who makes two holes in mending one.”

“ Well, I ’d take my bible oath of it, ’twas all your own fault ; for I’m sure and certain—you have only to say your say—and plenty of nice women would have come at your beck—so they would ! Come, dear Major, another sup—’tis pure poteen ; and I vow there is not a head-ache in a puncheon of it, now, *agraah*, draw into the fire and tell me all about it.”

I then related to her my adventure with

Fanny, to which the widow listened with deep attention; now stirring the fire, and then shaking her nether garments, and drawing nearer to the hearth—ever and anon ejaculating as I proceeded in my narrative, “Oh! the vagabone! see there, the monster! *och mavrone*, the bare-faced hussy!” I must confess, I felt gratified at the sympathy she expressed at hearing of my mishaps. When I had concluded, she gave me a rap on the knee (fortunately not on the gouty side) and replenishing my glass, addressed me with great warmth :

“Och! Major, all this arose from your want of knowledge in looking for a juvenile girl instead of seeking a help-mate of a certain *skimatrix* of life. Young chits will always dwell upon a *disparagement* of age; for girls, Sir, and I know them as well as if I’d made them, girls look more to the *physicky incapacities* of man than to his *immoral* qualities; they don’t care a fig for your men of sense and larning. The *protuberance* of their *ineffectual* faculties,” (I presume she meant *exuberance*,) “is not sufficiently *depreciated* by these whirligigs, and

as they say—love of lads and fire of chits is soon in and soon out.”

“ Yet,” I replied, “ I did not seek for a piping hot affection, but merely a little gratitude in return for my devotion.”

“ Lord love you !—that’s not the sort of thing for your money, Major. At your time of life, one musn’t go on dilly-dallying, shilly-shallying, like a Cupid ; happy is the wooing that is not long in doing ; and though I *desecrate* your forward women who think that one must needs yoke when the cart comes to the horses, yet there’s nothing like hitting the nail on the head. Young girls, Major, are *questionable* things that seldom *answer* a staid gentleman like you and I.”

“ *Staid !* my dear Mrs. Tinder,” I replied, “ I’m surprised that so fascinating a woman as you, could have *staid* so long in the weeds of widowhood.”

“ Arrah ! be asy, you deceiver,” she replied, patting me on the cheek. “ You’re a wicked one, and so you are ; take another sup, and listen. The more girls you see look in

their glasses, the less they look to their homes—and in all their love—and—*murther* marriages, the first month is a *honey-moon* or *smick-smack*, the second will be *hither and thither*, the third, *whick-whack*, and the fourth, *may the devil take him that brought us together*. Young women, Major, darling! are a *cantankerous* set, and as hot as hasty pudding; but when a body, the like of me, has been used to all the misfortunes of this *sublunary* world, and all its ups and downs, and all its ins and outs—she soon gets reconciled to matrimonial inconveniences; for as Solomon used to say: like blood, like good, and like age makes the happiest *marri-age*.”

Here the widow dropped a tear, and forgetting her doctor's advice, took my tumbler and swallowed off a bumper I had just filled, adding, with hysterical tears and sobs,—

“ Ah ! Major, you little know what sorrows I have suffered; 'twould break a heart of stone—so it would. Mr. Tinder, (peace be with him any how,) was a sad man, a rag on every bush—so he was; and the base villain

used to say when he occasionally came home the worse for liquor, every blessed night—that he married when he was fuddled! *Och mavrone!* only think o’ that, Major; I who might have married the best gentleman in the country that ever wore a head—and so I could. Had it not been for my two poor sweet babes, I would have dropped him like a hot *pratee*; but my poor *cooleens!* the darlings! when I saw the tief o’ the world drinking all my substance, I was obliged to *demonstrate* with him; when one blessed night, he up with his fist and hit me such a *polthogue!* Myria murder! the blood of the family was up, (for there never was better blood any where, sure, than that of the O’Flannagans), and I was of the rale Flannagans of Ballinacronan; so says I, do that again, you base coward, said I; so, says he, take that, for two make a pair, said he, and he hit me another *polthogue*. Upon this, Major dear, I had the weakness to take up a pewter pot in self-defence, and to keep him off, hit him an unlucky blow on the back part of the head, just on the right temple, and he fell down as flat as a fluke.”

"What!" I exclaimed, rising with horror, "you killed your husband!"

"Arrah! don't be so hasty, Major; he was only kilt. There was no doctor at hand, so I poured some whisky down his throat, and that revived him; but somehow or other, the second day he took it into his head to die, and wasn't it I that waked him! arrah! murder, murder, a tenderer wife never lived!"

The widow now burst into a fit of tears—her breathing became hysterical—her face assumed a crimson hue—she convulsively threw herself upon my lap, and fainted in my arms. I never had found myself in such a situation before, when the door flew open, and in walked the Misses Tinder with their escorts. Upon seeing their mother in my arms, Biddy gave a loud shriek, and Katty exclaimed:—

"Who would have thought it!"

To my utter surprise, up jumped Mrs. Tinder, roaring out:

"Who would have thought what? Miss Impudence."

"I, Madam," replied Katty, with solemnity, "I should have thought better of you

Madam, at your time of life," and so saying, she gravely stalked out of the room.

"After this, mother," said Biddy, in a roar of laughter, "when you talk of propriety, a pig may walk in to be shaved;" and having delivered this dutiful observation, she ran after her sister.

Mrs. Tinder evinced an ardent disposition to follow her impertinent offsprings; but she perhaps thought it more prudent to restrain her ire in the presence of strangers, and bidding us all good night, with a sweet smile of affability, she turned up her hands and her eyes to Heaven, exclaiming: "Arrah musha! who would wish for daughters! They're the plague and botheration of my poor life. Betwane the two, a body might as well be dragged through a furze bush. Bad cess to them! as the old saying says:—

"Fair and foolish—black and proud,
Long and lazy—little and loud."

And with this appropriate poetical effusion, she hurried after the amiable young ladies.

She had scarcely left the room, when the Irish lieutenant, who in his astronomical observations seemed to have contemplated something stronger than the milky way, had the audacity to bring me to an account, for what he called 'the shindy I had kicked up;' to which I quietly replied, that if I had not the gout in my foot, I should most indubitably kick him down stairs. He instantly retorted, that he should expect immediate satisfaction; but when I fixed upon the following morning by cock shout, his pen feathers began to smooth down, and he observed, that if I had no intention of offending him, he was sorry for his hasty conduct. The interference of the musician harmonized matters, and we sat down to punch and cribbage.

I can carry my liquor tolerably well, but somehow or other, what with Mrs. Tinder's amatory insinuations, and the confusion of the scene I had witnessed, I was soon overpowered, lost at a game of which I knew but little, and not being overburthened with loose cash, had

to give the winners I. O. Us. for the amount. But scarcely had my unsteady hand signed these promissory notes, the amount of which I could not well decypher, when the most horrible yells of murder! help! murder! re-echoed throughout the house, evidently proving that hostilities had broken out amongst the allies, and hollow blows, sounding like the long roll of a drum, announced that the skirmishing was waxing warm.

Mr. Sharp and Mr. Murphy instantly seized candlesticks and ran to save their fair companions, while I grasped a red hot poker out of the fire, and hobbled after them up stairs as well as I could. There the scene was terrific. The ladies had cast off their daily habiliments, and were in a nocturnal costume, as disencumbered for action as the Amazons of old. At her chamber-door, which she guarded like a portcullis, stood Mrs. Tinder, wielding and whirling a warming-pan with as much dexterity as a fudge-man, while the repeated blows of a mop-stick, brandished by Miss Katty, and a large tin black jack ma-

nœuvred by Miss Biddy, kept time upon the brazen weapon like a kettle-drum, as the deafening shrieks of the furious combatants were pitched in three octaves.

It would have been no easy matter to discover the subject of the fray had not various wrathful expressions in some measure explained matters.

"You abandoned old woman!" roared out Biddy.

"You are welcome to the old frump yourself," cried out Katty.

"I'll leave your house to-morrow morning," continued Biddy.

"You may go to the devil if you like in a hand canter," rejoined Mrs. Tinder.

These ejaculations at once proclaimed that jealousy was at the bottom of the business. The musician seized Biddy in order to draw her from the fight—a black eye was the result. Teddy Murphy grappled Katty, who complimented him with a facer that drew a copious flow of Irish claret; and I rushed with port-arms to the assistance of my hostess who acciden-

tally mistaking me for one of her daughters, saluted my head with such a desperate blow of the warming-pan, that I rolled down at her feet, whilst she, carried away by the impetuosity of her exertions, fell over me, and her daughters incontinently rolled over us both.

The action now began to assume a more important character. The red hot poker, which fell out of my hands when wounded, had set fire to Mrs. Tinder's night raiments, and in a moment she was in a blaze, roaring out that she was burnt alive.

All the elements of war were now let loose. Lieutenant Murphy and the musician ran for jugs of water and poured a torrent on the burning lady to extinguish her ; while I crept out from under this heap of calamity, and very wisely stole away to my room, leaving the parties to settle the business amongst themselves.

My gout gave me excruciating pain, besides which I was singed, beaten, and wet to the skin. I got into bed with great difficulty, and after much tossing and tumbling, the

uproar in the house having gradually subsided, I began to doze.

I had scarcely closed my eyes, however, when I was awakened by the most horrid cries of fire ! fire ! I started up in my bed, and already found my room full of smoke. With much difficulty I made for the door, and to my great dismay beheld the staircase in a blaze, and the three ladies and my two fellow-lodgers rushing through the conflagration in a state that would have put the very firemen to the blush.

There was no time for reflection, so I followed them and their example, by rolling after the fugitives down stairs, little thinking at the time that I had been the cause of all the mischief ; for it subsequently appeared that it was my unfortunate poker that had first burnt a hole in the stair-carpet and then in the boards under it, propagating the fiery element with uncontrolled fury.

Fright and bruises had nearly deprived me of my senses ; and when I could collect my thoughts, I found myself in a humble inn in the neighbourhood, recovering from a brain fever. I

had been bled, shaved, and blistered by an apothecary ; and a company of empty phials, proved that he had also attended to my inward injuries, by pouring down oceans of physic, which not being able to swallow, he had kindly drenched me with through a cow-horn that was lying on the table.

This fellow now paid me a visit to congratulate me on my recovery from certain death, as he called it ; for he said I had suffered under concussion, commotion, congestion of the brain, depression of the skull, inflammation of the pia-mater, suppuration of the dura-mater, with separation of the pericranium ; that I had lost all power of deglutition, volition, digestion, and assimilation, that my œsophagus and thoracic ducts had been spasmodically bunged up, and all my sphincters dilated and paralysed.


I was horror-struck with this catalogue of miseries and dangers, which reconciled me to the payment of fifteen pounds' worth of physic in the course of a week ; attendance in blank, which I filled up with ten pounds more. To mend matters, my whole kit had

been consumed, and I found myself as well set up in necessaries as a dead man after a battle.

I was just beginning to ruminate on my future plans, had written to my agents to sell out a little stock to meet my disasters, when, to my utter surprise, Miss Biddy Tinder was ushered into my chamber. Her looks were dejected, and with much hesitation she approached my bedside, and bursting into tears covered her face with her beautiful hands, and threw herself down in a chair by my bedside. I supplicated her in the most earnest manner to console herself, and begged to know the cause of her grief. She then, with a faltering voice intermingled with sobs, proceeded to relate her sorrows. She first intimated with the utmost delicacy, that from the moment she had seen me, she had experienced the most sincere esteem, the warmest regard for me. That when she compared my solid attainments with the superficial qualities of Mr. Sharp, whom she had discovered was secretly attached to a scene-shifter's wife,

this friendship for me had assumed a character still more hostile to her peace of mind; that it had broken her slumbers and rendered her miserable; for she evidently perceived that I preferred the society of her sister. Nay, such had been her feelings, that she blushed to own she had not seen with indifference my attentions to her mother, whose seat near me at table she always envied.

I cannot tell you how much I was affected by this account. Biddy had lost her lovely colour—her complexion was now pallid and sallow; indeed misery was written in her once lovely and blooming countenance. I knew not what to say when she told me, wiping off a falling tear that I longed to kiss away, that she was going out as a governess to New Zealand, where she would endeavour to forget all the fond ties that once endeared her to her home—when I lodged with them before the fire. Her tears now began to flow most copiously, and turning to her my sound cheek I fondly pressed the dear girl to my bosom. She started, horror-struck at her imprudence, and collecting herself took my hand



and asked me as a parting favour, to accept a pen-wiper in the form of a butterfly that she had worked for me, and requested me to write my name in her album, as she would ever value what she called my precious autograph. I did not hesitate to write my signature under a beautiful drawing of Love and Hymen. She then grasped my hand, bathed it with her tears, and rushed out of the room in apparent despair.

Left to myself, the past scene appeared to me a fairy dream, and I actually looked in the glass to see if my accident had not improved my appearance. Alas! it was quite the reverse, for my head had been shaven, and I began to reflect on the capricious nature of woman's partiality when I beheld my red night-cap and my grisly beard, and marvelled at the singular effect of fascinating manners, even in a plain man. At this moment the door opened and in walked Miss Katty. This circumstance astonished me still more than the preceding visit.

Katty was in deep mourning, a long veil partly concealed her dejected features, and she glided towards my bed like a spectre; then fixing her

dark eyes upon me, she exclaimed : " Major, dear Major, can you forgive me ! " and so saying, she fell upon her knees by my bedside.

I raised the disconsolate damsel as well as I could, and begged her to be seated, and tell me in what she possibly could have offended me. Her grief was silent—she heaved no sighs—she shed no tears—but thus addressed me in a solemn tone :


" We are all either born under a favourable or a disastrous planet. Stellar influence, sidereal sympathies, work our weal and woe. Some lunar phase, some planetary power, guides and directs our destinies ; all my hopes and early joys were like a shooting star that illumines the dark firmament with a momentary scintillation, then disappears for ever, leaving all around in utter darkness."

This preamble staggered me, and I fancied the girl was mad. I started up in my bed, when she again seized my hand and continued in the same strain : " Mark me, Major, dear Major Rumford, bravest of the brave, most amiable of men."

My apprehension of her madness began to subside, and I attentively listened to her singular conversation.

“ Long before I had known you, I had heard of you. I had read of your gallant exploits in Egypt, where, in jumping out of your boat when landing on the 9th of March, you cut down a French dragoon who had ridden into the ocean to oppose you. I read of your brave conduct on the 21st, when Abercrombie fell, and you saved the noble Anthony Lutz of the Minorca regiment when he carried the standard of the invincibles, and was about to be deprived of his glorious prize by the foe. I read of your daring conduct at Maida when you led the advance to charge the French line and disperse their far-famed 1st regiment, which they considered the first in the world ; and then I beheld you before me—could gaze upon you at all hours—could feed my eyes in beholding the crescent* you wore, and that

* The officers who served in the Egyptian campaign were decorated by the sultan with a medal of the crescent.



glorious scar which, far from disfiguring you, could only heighten the consideration which a sensitive woman would entertain for you. But, alas! I soon discovered your affections were bestowed upon my sister. I could not envy her good fortune, but I sought in the pride of our sex to disguise my sentiments, by appearing to receive with civility the addresses of that odious Irishman, Mr. Murphy—a militia-man who has never seen the enemy. You, Sir, you, possessed of so much perspicacity, must have wondered how I could for one instant have entertained the slightest regard for such a thing as the Kerry lieutenant. Know then, Sir, that I was taking a desperate resolution ; that I struggled with my feelings, and endeavoured to appear to conquer, when in truth my poor vanquished heart was breaking.”

The interesting girl now dropped a tear. I knew not what to reply. After a short pause, however, she thus proceeded :—

“ I am now about to leave England for ever.

The vessel in which I have taken my passage will sail next week for Bombay. I should not have troubled you, dear Major, but we women are feeble creatures ; I should have left my country, and never sought to see you again, had not my happy sister deepened my wound, and insulted my feelings ; harassed my very soul, by telling me that she had won your affections ; and as a proof of it, shewed me your name inscribed in her album in exchange for a keepsake—a token of her love !—Her love ! Biddy is a stranger to that noble sentiment—that glorious emanation from the Heavens ! that eternal plant,

“ Whereof the root was fixed in virtue’s ground.”

Biddy, whose volatile mind is incapable of a noble and generous effort ! Biddy, who would weep as bitterly at a song on the death of a butterfly, as at the loss of worth and merit ! But let her not triumph over me ! if ever

woman's love—excuse me, Sir, I am bewildered—if ever woman's esteem had a claim, I shall not dare to say a reciprocal feeling—but a little sympathy—accept this lock of Catherine's hair! wear it for me in the field of honour, and think sometimes of one who wished she had never known the hero of Alexandria and of Maida.”

Oh! with what ecstasy did I clasp the dear creature to my bosom! All!—all she asked me in return for this present was the same favour I had conferred on her sister. I eagerly seized the pen and inserted my name in her album, under a drawing of the *forget me not*.

When she received the gift, she pressed it to her lips, adding :

“ This name, which shall live to eternity in the annals of fame, shall ever be remembered by the unfortunate Catherine! Bidly then, shall not triumph! Major, dear Major! farewell—adieu—for ever!”

I was about to reply, but she vanished like a vision, leaving me once more to my

strange thoughts. I now did really begin to entertain more serious plans of marriage, so soon as I could return into society. After the avowal of these two lovely girls, it was obvious that my case was not desperate, and I resolved to get a becoming wig, read poetry again, and set out in quest of fresh adventures. A few days afterwards, while I was thus speculating upon my future prospects, and at the same time despondingly looking into my agent's abstract, by which it appeared I was considerably his debtor, I received the following terrific letter, which I have ever since kept by me.

Here the Major took out a tattered paper from his pocket-book, and read the following:—

“ Sir,

“ Whereas it appears that on or about the 10th December, in the year of our Lord 17—, the premises of John Flint, occupied by Arabella Tinder, widow, were consumed by fire, and whereas it appeareth that the said

premises were burnt and consumed in consequence of your having with force of arms unlawfully, maliciously, feloniously and wilfully burnt and consumed the aforesaid premises against the peace of our Sovereign Lord, the King, by setting fire thereunto with an iron, destructive, and unlawful instrument, commonly called a red hot poker, against the form of the statute, maliciously, feloniously, and wilfully burning and consuming a stair-carpet and floor of the aforesaid premises ; you are thereby declared a felon without benefit of clergy.

“ I should, therefore, advise you to defend the cause on the plea of *non compos mentis* : the widow, Tinder, (who is arrested as being your aider and abettor,) and you being, even in the event of its being proved a simple misdemeanour, punishable by fine, imprisonment, pillory, and perpetual security for your good behaviour, the aforesaid red hot poker coming under the statute of *incendit*, etc. I have further to state for your information, that

although it may be proved that the said burning and consuming was accidental, yet by the statute 6 Anne, cap. 31, you are both liable to be publicly whipped and sent to the house of correction for eighteen calendar months, on the principle of the Roman law: *eos qui negligenter ignes apud se habuerunt fustibus vel flagellis cædi.*

“ However, as this prosecution is carried on at the suit of the —— Fire office, of which I am solicitor, it may be possible to prevent *personal* inconvenience. You will, therefore, be pleased upon receipt of this to forward me fifty pounds to stop all further proceedings.

I remain, Sir,


Your obedient servant,

SAMUEL SIFTWELL.”

The horror with which this letter inspired me, may be easily imagined. I did not understand the diabolical communication, but it

was clear that I was exposed to be whipped and imprisoned in the most barbarous manner. Moreover, my finances were in a piteous state, and I forthwith packed up all my traps, 'paid my bill, and fled with the utmost speed, never resting until I had reached Calais, and the sea rolled its protecting waves between me and Mr. Siftwell.

I remained in France for six months, referring the business to a lawyer, who after stringing up six-and-eight-pences until his bill amounted to fifteen pounds, acquainted me that the whole business was an infamous hoax to extort money from me. He strongly advised me to prosecute the parties 'for fraudulently and deceitfully demanding lawful money, to the evil example of all others in the like manner offending;' but I had had enough of law, and after settling this account, which I flattered myself was the last, I returned to England, where I received a promise from the Horse Guards of having my memorial for being replaced upon full pay taken into consideration at an early opportunity.




The recollection of the affectionate parting of the Misses Tinder, was still the subject of my frequent meditations. My hair had now grown, and I looked as gay as ever.

The demon of marriage still goaded me on, and one morning seeing an advertisement in the paper of a matrimonial agent who had several parties to propose, I ventured to seek for a ready-made love instead of taking the trouble of making it myself. The agent announced that he had several ladies of different ages, conditions, tempers and temperaments, and I forthwith repaired to his office; all I required was a quiet, domestic, gentle lady, not particularly young, but yet possessing some little attractions.

But judge of my terror—my horror—when on thus expressing myself, three doors leading to adjoining rooms were thrown open, and Mrs. Tinder and her two daughters, who unknown to each other, had also applied to the matrimonial office, rushed in like sky rockets.

Mrs. Tinder, with a loud exclamation of delight, threw herself into my arms. I threw myself into an arm-chair, more dead than



alive ; and Miss Katty and Miss Biddy threw themselves upon me, both with the most violent invectives and imprecations, and would have torn their mother's eyes out had they not been restrained by the astonished agent ; while I availed myself of a momentary lull in the storm to rush out of the house.

Unfortunately my address was known at the office ; and two days afterwards I received a formal letter from two attorneys, acquainting me that having made a promise of marriage to Miss Biddy and Miss Katty, I was called upon to fulfil my engagement, or to stand a suit at law.

I verily believe that I should have lost my senses between the terrible option left me, for in whatever way I acted, the law grappled with me. If I married one of the ladies, the other would surely prosecute me, and if I married them both, I should be exposed to be hanged for bigamy. But the recollection of the former hoax led me to suspect that this was a fresh imposition, more especially as I never had by word

or deed, promised or even thought of marriage with either of the parties.

I therefore with a heavy heart repaired to my solicitor, who accompanied me to the legal friends who had been employed by these manœuvring women. How often I wished them and their pen wiper, and their lock of hair, and their flattery about Maida and Egypt, at the bottom of the Red Sea !

Alas ! my miseries were only beginning. I was merely on the threshold of the Pandemonium of the law. The attorneys exhibited a promise of marriage made by me to each of the Misses Tinder, binding myself to unite my wretched destiny to them in the course of twenty-four calendar months, or forfeit a thousand pounds ! I was horror-struck when I beheld my signature affixed to these fearful documents ; and recognised in one moment the pages of the album in which I had written my name under the pencil drawings that the Misses Tinder had rubbed out. If any circumstance could add to my despair

and rage, it was the malignant sneer of the attorneys, who seemed to enjoy the joke amazingly.

I had no option then left me but to abide by the issue of a law-suit, or come to some amicable arrangement with the parties. Five hundred pounds were accepted by each of them, and my mortification was not a little increased when I read in the newspaper a week after this extortion, the marriage of Miss Bridget Tinder to Samuel Sharp, Esq. and Miss Catharine to Lieutenant Murphy. To defray their nuptial expenses, I had moreover to take up my I. O. Us, amounting to one hundred and fifty pounds more !

Here the Major ended his unlucky adventures in search of a wife. Although every one present sympathised in his misfortunes, yet they were of so ludicrous a nature, that it was with difficulty his warmest friends could suppress a smile. One of the party, a Captain Merton, was therefore resolved to afford him

some consolation, having been himself a fellow sufferer in the Court of Love, and commenced the following narrative of his own mishaps when trusting to the faith of women.

CAPTAIN MERTON.

WE have all felt how much our friend, Major Rumford, must have been disappointed in his various endeavours to court the silken slavery of women ; yet his purse seems to have suffered more than his heart. If that organ can, according to common parlance, be broken, mine must have been made of the toughest materials to withstand the shock it once received.

No loss can be more severely felt, no pangs can be more acute, than those inflicted by infidelity on the part of her whom we trust in life and in death, in whom all our fondest hopes are concentrated, and whose existence, one might say, seems to be identified with our own. The frowns of fortune may be scorned, and better fortune hoped for ; the

privation of health may be endured in religious resignation to the Divine will; friends who forsake us, only prove to us the fickleness of worldly ties; but love once fondly requited, carries our hopes even beyond our mortal tenement, and when the hand of death is about to sever us from all we hold dear on earth, we fondly cherish the thought of a happier re-union, and for ever. When in happy moments we swear to love to that indefinite period, we dare not believe that lips can pronounce so fond—so sacred a vow, basely to betray. There is no loneliness in the world when man contemplates the beauties of the earth and the wonders of the firmament, provided that he has no worldly ties beyond those by which nature has bound us to our relatives; but when he loves and is deserted, all around becomes void—he follows the vocations of life as it were mechanically; and existence, which when consecrated to another, is a precious gift, becomes irksome; we can no longer attach ourselves to others, and we cease to value ourselves;

Madame de Staël has truly said :—‘ *On cesse de s’aimer si quelqu’un ne nous aime.*’

With what anxiety did I not sigh for promotion ! *She* would shed tears of joyous sympathy in reading my name in the Gazette. With what pride did I not rush into the field ! and almost envy the fate of my wounded friends who fell around me ! *She* would weep over my sufferings and beguile my misery. Now, I merely seek rank as a provision for my latter days, and fulfil the soldier’s duty, I trust with becoming zeal, since I have devoted to the honour and glory of my country, a life which was once dear to another.

My regiment had been quartered for some time in Kent. When at Maidstone, I had met in the house of a worthy clergyman, the daughter of another member of our church. I shall not presume to describe her ; she was, I can only say, all that was lovely, not only in mine own fond eyes, but in those of all who beheld her. Her father was a curate ; I was an ensign : to marry under such circumstances would have been an act of insa-

nity—nay, of cruelty to one we love, and whose happiness ought to be our only wish. I had nothing beyond my pay, and marriage in such a condition reminds one of the strange ejaculations of a Major Murphy of the Irish militia, who upon hearing of such an imprudent match at the mess-table, laid down his knife and fork, and turning up his eyes and hands, exclaimed :—‘ *Och Jasus ! an ensign marry, and mutton at six-pence a pound !* ’

Ann Colville had rejected many advantageous offers, assuring her father that she would rather beg her bread with her Edward than enjoy with another all the gifts that fortune could bestow. Had it not been for the prudence of her father, in which I reluctantly acquiesced, we should have been united.

The affairs of the Peninsula now indicated approaching operations upon an extensive scale, and my regiment completed to its war establishment by volunteers from the militia, would, in all probability, be one of the first called into action ; Mr. Colville, therefore, consented to bestow his daughter upon me so

soon as I had a fair prospect of obtaining promotion.

Shortly afterwards we were removed to Brabourn Lees barracks, preparatory to our embarkation. Ann repaired on a visit to a relative at Ashford, where we daily met. For two months I went to see her so soon as I was off duty. On these occasions she would reconduct me at night towards my barracks, and I in return would see her home, until not unfrequently night overtook our wanderings.

To accompany me was her most ardent wish; and had I consented to wed her contrary to her father's will, she often said that I should be to her, father, friend, protector, and guardian angel.

"Do you think," she would add, "that I can bear the thought of your being exposed to all the horrors of war, and far from me. Do you think that this poor heart will not break when I hear that a bloody conflict is expected?—that I shall not sink to

the earth when I learn that a battle has been fought, and know not of your fate! I feel that feeble as may be my frame, I could bear all the horrors and fatigues of war, to be near you; nay, could follow the example of those heroines who have dressed themselves in male attire, to follow the object of their affection. Yes, I am sure that I could bear even the terrors of a fight. Then if I heard that you had fallen, I could wander over the field and search for you. In the heaps of the dead and the dying, I would look for your dear features, and casting myself on your remains, die as I have lived, your *own*."

Then she would sometimes add, "And my jealous fears, to think you far away, among those lovely creatures of a southern clime, of whose fascination I have often read in romances—will you then think of me? Will not their raven locks, their bewitching dark eyes, form a painful contrast with the timid looks and fair ringlets of your poor English girl! Will you not sometimes think of her who

although she may not be so proudly beautiful as your Andalusian ladies, yet loves you with all the fervour and faith of one who never lived until she had known the master of her destinies,—without whom existence would be misery.”

Such was the tenor of her fond expressions, which even now I am silly enough to find pleasure in repeating. That they were at the time heartfelt I cannot doubt, since her pallid lips and cheeks, long forsaken by the glow of health and happiness, proclaimed the inward workings of her heart.

At last the route arrived ; we were ordered to embark at Ramsgate in the brigade of General Anstruther for Portugal. It was with the greatest difficulty that I prevented Ann from accompanying me to the place of embarkation ; indeed she would have been unable to support the task, so exhausted was she with grief. As the bugle called me away, she fell senseless in her father’s arms.

I scarcely knew where I was when I me-

chanically marched into Ramsgate. My mind was bewildered — I could not shed a tear; nay, what may seem singular, Ann's beloved image seemed to have abandoned me—the sad words of parting alone were ringing in my ears.

A soldier's life is one of continual excitement. The business of embarkation afforded me incessant occupation, and I was, moreover, appointed one of the caterers of our mess. Our colonel now came down to take leave of the regiment, and gave us a dinner at the hotel. I mechanically performed the various duties allotted to me on these occasions, but strange to say at that very dinner I was roused from my apathetic state by the band playing one of Ann's favourite tunes,

“ Oh the moment was sad when my love and I parted.”

Never before had I experienced the effect of music ; it acted upon me in the same manner as the *Rans des Vaches* is said to affect the absent

Swiss; every fibre in my frame was thrilled—tears started in my parched eyes, and I was obliged to quit the room. From that instant Ann's image never forsook me. I have heard of a religious enthusiast, who fancied that he beheld a configuration of the cross in every object about him; like that monomaniac, every thing around me reminded me of my absent beloved one.

On the 13th of August we embarked to join the forces under Sir Arthur Wellesley. Officers and men were glowing with ardour. A long repose in garrison rendered a military life irksome while other more fortunate corps, were in the field, and likely to distinguish themselves under the command of the gallant Sir John Moore. All ties of home were for a time forgotten, and even the soldier viewed with a calm eye the afflicting scenes that attended our embarkation.

Our complement had been filled up with militia men, chiefly from Irish regiments, and many of these volunteers had wives and chil-

dren. These unfortunate creatures had followed the regiment, but now, according to regulation, only a very small proportion of women were allowed to accompany their husbands; the remainder were to find their way to their distant homes, travelling on foot, with their feeble infants, from parish to parish, upon a wretched pittance, scarcely adequate to support life. The separation was heart-rending. At first by tears and entreaties they sought to supplicate for a passage, but the commanding officer's orders were imperative, and they were sternly refused. Despair soon followed grief—as the transports weighed anchor, infuriated, distracted, some of these poor wretches uttering fearful shrieks and tearing their hair, cast themselves upon the ground: others were with difficulty prevented from throwing themselves into the sea; while many, falling upon their knees, with uplifted eyes and hands, called upon heaven with dire imprecations to shower every curse upon our heads, that the eloquence of despair could suggest! As I was stepping off the pier, one woman of my

company seized me by the sash, and grasping me with a convulsive strength, exclaimed, "You have separated me from my husband! you have thrown me and my babes upon the wide world, and may the curse of the widow and the orphans attend your steps by day, and hover round you by night—may all that love you perish, and may all that you love betray you!" I was rescued by a strong effort from her iron hold, when she instantly precipitated herself into the waves, and was with difficulty saved.

Scarcely had this fearful scene terminated, when another, if possible as melancholy, added to the misery of our departure. A lovely young woman, gentle and elegant in manners, although of humble rank, had contrived to steal on board in the garb of a drummer, and concealed herself in the fore-castle; there she was discovered, and despite the entreaties of her youthful husband, dragged on shore. Her appearance was the picture of grief in all its bitterness of concentration. She shed no tear—she uttered no murmur. The extent of her

agony had even paralyzed the power of speech. She sat down upon the pier, her lovely blue eyes riveted upon the vessel that was about to bear away from her all that she loved upon earth. Her husband was silently leaning upon the bulwark of the ship, immoveable like herself.

That moment an order arrived to send a detachment to the dépôt. I rushed to my commanding officer, asked for one only, one first favour—it was granted. The young soldier was ordered to disembark. Never can I figure to myself in all the warmth of fancy's visions, raptures equal to those of the reunited couple. One would have thought that their embrace would have been eternal. They were only roused from their ecstasy by three cheers given by our men, as the swelling canvas bore them off, and the dismal yell of the women left on shore—a yell never to be forgotten !

This agonizing scene has ever since been present to my memory, and has often led me to consider the facility given to our soldiers to

marry, and the enlisting of married men as an act of cruelty. The continental armies are, in this respect, much better regulated, and no marriage can take place even among the officers, without a special permission.


Our exact destination was not yet known, although it was generally supposed to be the Tagus. This uncertainty kept our minds upon the constant stretch of expectation. My brother officers, who were aware of my attachment, sought every means to divert me from my sombre thoughts, that friendship could suggest; and while some of them held out the prospect of a successful campaign and a speedy and honourable return, others would describe the gay scenes of Spain and Portugal that awaited us, which would, they thought, soon make me forget my romantic love.

The captain of my company, Frank Greville, a young man of fortune and of considerable attainments, was my chief *confident*; he also had an attachment and experienced all the anguish that could attend on absence. With him I constantly conversed of Ann's

worth and beauty, and we vowed to each other an everlasting friendship, sealed by the promise of bearing our last words and blessing to the object of our affection, should one of us survive the other in approaching conflicts.

On the 18th we were off Mondego Bay, and there learnt that the affair of Roliça had taken place on the preceding day. As we sailed along, we were saluted by a few shots from the castle of Peniche, crested with troops in red uniform whom we had at first taken for our people; but who turned out to be Swiss. On the night of the 19th we landed in Maceira Bay, and on the 20th joined the army on the heights of Vimiero, which it was supposed the enemy would attack the following morning: each man was provided with three days' provisions, eighty cartridges, and three good flints.

During the whole night Greville and I paced the bivouac in earnest conversation. He had served in Egypt, had fought at Maida—my sword had not yet been fleshed. I wondered




at the calmness with which our young recruits slept—many of them destined to see the morning sun beaming on them for the last time. The older soldiers were seemingly engaged in relating past scenes of strife and anticipating the variety of future campaigns—the chances of plunder and the adventures of a camp; while some of them were hammering their flints, and others cooking their rations for the following day with the experience of veterans who make it a rule always to *eat when they can*.

The morning of the 21st beamed in all the beauty of a southern climate. Before day the troops had stood to their arms, and about half-past seven we could perceive a mist arising on the blue horizon gradually forming a dense cloud, which announced to practiced eyes the movement of masses of infantry. The staff officers were grouped in anxious expectation, their glasses fixed upon the towering dust, which to the young soldiers appeared to be only a distant smoke.

And now the rattling of gun-carriages—

the squeaking noise of the Portuguese carts with their massive axle-trees and ungreased wheels, and the busy hum of the whole line, proclaimed that the enemy was approaching, while aides-de-camp were hastening in every direction to give the orders of the commander-in-chief.

Our brigade was formed upon a *plateau* of a ridge of hills extending to the eastward of the village of Vimiero, and we were flanked by a brigade of guns. While we were in the act of forming our line, a scene took place which strongly illustrated a soldier's feelings in the hour of danger. Upon our left was formed the — regiment, which had been for a long time distracted in its several quarters by party feelings and dissensions: court-martials, duels, and continued strife indeed had marked it as one of the most unhappy corps in the service. The commanding officer had his partizans, and their opponents, equally numerous, were in constant collision with his authority and his satellites. On this day, to our surprise, the officers were as-




sembled, and after a short address from their chief, we were delighted to see all parties cordially shake hands and form the resolution to forget, in deeds of honour, their former feuds. Many of them were destined to seal this compact with their blood.

The cloud of dust had now become more extensive and spread wide its wings, through which we plainly perceived the glistening arms of the advancing enemy, reflecting the solar beams. Their blue lines every moment became more distinct, and the rumbling roll of their brass drums was plainly heard, while a confused buzz of distant voices, accompanied their martial instruments. Our young soldiers, whose hearts were bounding with expectation, hope, and fear—would gladly have indulged in conversation with their more experienced comrades, but the word '*silence*' was passed, soon followed by that awful word of command, '*Prime and load.*' Instantly the clatter of ramrods was heard along the whole line, and a dead silence again followed.

The French columns of infantry were now

advancing while their cavalry dashed rapidly along the road leading to the mill of Fontanel, and their 32nd, 82nd and 86th regiments led by Loison, Charlaud and Thomières boldly attacked our position. Our stillness was broken by our guns which threw their destructive shrapnel shot in the midst of the enemy's battalions; they were soon answered by a shower of howitzer-shells, which whizzed harmlessly over our heads to burst in our rear in the midst of the Portuguese baggage-cars.

The artillery was now blazing from every point of our position, whenever the few guns that we had, could be brought to bear with effect. We were ordered to reserve our fire until the enemy should attack the front of our position, upon which they were rapidly moving, led on by General Delaborde in person, while the shout of *Vive l'Empereur* was re-echoed through their ranks. They boldly ascended the hill, preceded by a swarm of skirmishers who kept picking off our men, and rushed on with fearless energy, although our cannon were thinning their line with de-



structive cannister. They were close upon us ; —we could even distinguish the eagle on their shakos.

Their shouts and the sound of their *pas de charge* were so loud that they were heard through the cannons' roar. At this instant the word to 'FIRE' was given, and immediately a volley from our line made them stagger ; —they paused for a moment—their officers in front waving their swords urged them on. Again they advanced with vociferous outcries, when another volley once more slackened their ardour. Again they paused, wheeled round, and despite all the endeavours of their officers, fled in dismay and confusion down the hill, pursued by the 50th and the 97th regiments under Walker and Lyon, and flanked by the destructive fire of the 43rd and 52nd commanded by Hall and Ross.


At this moment a small body of cavalry of about two hundred men, led on by the gallant Taylor, dashed after the fugitives. Had we now possessed only a few regiments of dragoons, the discomfiture of the enemy would have

been complete; but Taylor fell, and Margaron, the French cavalry General, perceiving our disparity of numbers in that important arm, saved the broken infantry by a rapid advance of eight hundred horse led on by the Prince of Salm Salm.

It was at this moment of victory that my captain and friend, Frank Greville, fell wounded by a musket-ball in the breast. We were directed to resume our position on the heights, and I bore him in my arms until I placed him in the surgeon's hands.

I had scarcely time to speak to him, or to learn whether his wound was mortal, when Kellermann sought to wipe off the stain of Delaborde's arms, by renewing the attack at the head of a body of grenadiers; but, doomed to share in his companion's disaster, he also was repulsed by the converging fire of our battalions—again the élite of their army was precipitated down the heights in confusion and consternation.

And now our whole line began to advance; every heart beating high with the proud hope



of pursuing the retreating enemy ; when orders to suspend all further operations were passed along the line, and a gloom was cast on our impatient troops who were with difficulty restrained from rushing forward.

A new chief had by this time assumed the command, and plucked from our brows the young laurels that had just been gained. Seven guns were in our possession, the front of our position was strewn with fourteen hundred dead and wounded—the enemy flying in every direction—and yet we were halted ! The road of Torres Vedras was occupied by General Hill ; our right might have reached Lisbon before the routed legions of Junot, when in all probability his whole army would have been destroyed—and yet we were halted ! Their arms were piled by the murmuring soldiers, and orders were given to cook. An Irishman in my company said to me, ‘ by *Jasus*, it’s useless to be after cooking, *your honour*, for *our honour* is already *dished*.’

I sought out Greville ; he was in the church of Vimiero where the wounded had been col-

lected. The ball had penetrated his chest, and, although not in danger of losing his life, his medical attendants were of opinion that the wound was of a serious nature, and required his removal to England. How I envied his fate ! The pride of returning wounded to Ann after a splendid victory and promotion, for a vacancy by death insured it to me—and then to recover under her fond care ! Then to return again to the glorious conflict and obtain the rank her father decided I should acquire before we could be united !

I exerted all my endeavours to cheer the drooping spirits of my friend, who anxiously asked me : “Is the victory complete ? Have they laid down their arms ?” My silence amazed him ; similar questions were put by most of the wounded. But, alas ! all I could tell them was that the victory was complete, as far as our arms were concerned, but that the moral triumph was our enemy’s.

Being ordered on outlying picquet duty, I was obliged to leave Greville in the hands of our surgeon, and it was with every degree of

confidence ; for being a stranger to the scenes of war, I never could have conceived the nature of the arduous duties of our medical officers in the field. Dressing the wounded under a shower of shot and shells exploding around them, with all the calm confidence of a surgeon in his hospital—performing fearful operations—called upon in every direction for their valuable aid, and unable from the pressure of casualties to attend to the clamorous solicitations for relief—bare-headed under a burning sun—kneeling on the rugged fields, their brows pouring down streams of perspiration over faces smeared with gore—the crimson instruments gleaming in their hands, while removing a shattered limb, or extracting a deadly ball—and then amidst the dire confusion, ever and anon cheering the wounded soldier's drooping spirits with words of hope and glory—refreshing his parched lips black with the bitten cartridge, and soothing his anguish with the thoughts of a speedy sight of home. How little do we think in the quiet days of peace, of the services of the

soldier-surgeon ; deeds of honour are recorded in the annals of war, but the men of science, who dare death in every shape in pestilential hospitals, and often in the field, without a claim to the victorious palm which others seek, are forgotten and neglected—nay, but seldom permitted to join the officers whose life once depended on their skill, who in brilliant array crowd round their sovereign's throne. They no longer belong to the privileged aristocracy of the land—they are mere *surgeons*. Such was not the opinion of Idomeneus when he bade Nestor ascend his chariot with *Machaon* : ‘ *Machaon* whom alone from his skill in relieving our wounds is worth a thousand warriors !’

The following day an alarm was spread in our lines : the drums beat to arms—the bugles sounded—in a moment all was confusion. “ *The enemy is advancing*” was the general cry—no *vedettes* had been thrown out, and in a moment a group of horsemen were close to my picquet.

The trumpet sounded. An officer waved

a white handkerchief—it was a flag of truce. I halted my party for further orders: little as I was acquainted with the art of war, it occurred to me, that the confusion we were in was so disgraceful to our military character, that it would have been prudent to have recourse to the usual custom adopted on such occasions and to blindfold the enemy's emissary; but I was a mere subaltern. A staff-officer arrived, and the detachment, for such it was, was allowed a free admission in our camp. Wellington had offered to meet Kellermann at our out-posts; Sir Hugh Dalrymple declined the proposition. During the day I learnt from an Irish trumpeter of the enemy, that the truce was borne by General Kellermann. The trumpeter, who by the bye, had not sounded the trumpet, blown by another horseman, appeared to me above his rank: his hands were delicate, his fingers adorned with rings, and nothing but his dress bespoke the humble grade he seemed to hold. I was also (in my utter ignorance of the rules of war) surprised that a lieutenant-general should be

sent as a *parlementaire*—but this only shewed my want of experience. I subsequently fell in with my *trumpeter*, who was a *chef d'escadron*, and who assured me that his general had received *carte blanche* to submit to any terms; but upon observing our state of disorganisation, our want of cavalry, and the evident condition of our *matériel*, he demanded terms that could scarcely have been expected from a half vanquished foe. He moreover informed me, that so far was Kellermann from needing an interpreter, that he was perfectly acquainted with the English language! Europe knows the result. British historians will lay down their pen in doubt, when they shall have to trace Cintra's indelible stain on our honour, our pride, and our glory! Wellington declared that he did not approve the fatal instrument.*

* So disgusted was the Duke of Wellington with these proceedings that he thus wrote on the subject to Captain Malcolm of the Donegal. "I am afraid I am so much connected with the credit of this army, that I cannot remain with it without falling—as it will fall. If I could

Sick to the heart at this disgusting scene, I was delighted when I was ordered to accompany the wounded prisoners to Oporto. Greville was put on board the same vessel, and we set sail for our destination. The account of the wounded French officers only tended to increase our dissatisfaction and surprise. The entire of the French troops had been engaged; even a body-guard of horse composed of Portuguese young men of rank raised by Junot for Lisbon duty, had been obliged to take the field; and when one of the aide-de-camps said with a bitter sigh, 'your army is *of course*

be of any use to men who have served me so well, I would stay with them for ever; but as matters are situated, I am convinced they cannot render any service, and I have determined to go home immediately. The Convention, by which the French should be allowed to evacuate Portugal, ought to be settled in the most honourable manner to the army by which they had been beaten, and we ought not to be kept for ten days on our field of battle, before an enemy (who sued us on the day after the action) is brought to terms. I am quite annoyed on this subject. I have only to regret that I put my name to an agreement of which I did not approve and did not negotiate."

cutting us off from Lisbon ;' a sigh escaped from me in return still deeper. However, I derived some consolation in my conversation with these officers, as it was evident that they were disgusted with the treacherous and perfidious conduct of the Emperor, and that discord reigned in all the military councils of the Peninsula. Most of these officers indeed, seemed gratified at the thought of going to England, provided they were not placed on board the *pontons* or hulks, which they considered worse than death. The horror inspired by these floating prisons were increased by the idea of their being clad in yellow—a colour held by the French in utter abhorrence. " Kill us," said one of them, " murder us at once, but *ne nous habillez pas en jaune.*"

The inhabitants of Oporto received us with every demonstration of joy. *Te Deum* was sung, during which an unpleasant circumstance, although of a somewhat ludicrous nature, occurred, which interrupted the ceremony. A large wax candle had been given

to each of our officers who moved in the procession to the church, and who were then placed in the stalls of the choir. At the moment of the elevation of the host, as the bell tinkled, the drum rolled, and the band struck up, every one as usual fell upon his knees. An officer who held one of the massive tapers, respectfully leaned forward to simulate a genuflection, and unluckily inclined it downwards over the bald head of a fat friar who knelt beneath him. The melted wax kept falling upon his tonsured crown, until the monk could bear it no longer, when jumping up, and dancing with agony, he roared out *Jesus! Maria! José!* and endeavoured to rush out through the terrified crowd. In an instant the whole church was in confusion; the soldiers pressed through the dense congregation; all roaring out *Os Franceses! Os Franceses!* The *Te Deum* was for a time interrupted, until order was again restored. The smile of the British officers at the ridiculous accident, which could not be repressed, appeared impious to the faithful,

who sympathetically felt for the friar's scalded scalp.

The disgraceful conditions of the Cintra-convention, had now become generally known. Nothing could induce the Portuguese to believe that we had not been bribed to allow the French to bear off their plunder. The arrival of the French garrison of Almeida, to embark at Oporto, with their arms and baggage, afforded to the populace further grounds for this suspicion.

The French troops proceeded to embark, but the alarm was spread ; the infuriated mob flocked upon the quay ; cannon was brought down to bear upon the vessels ; and had it not been for the exertions of Sir Robert Wilson, and a few British officers with him, aided by the bishop, the prisoners would inevitably have been murdered. Although I grieved to think that these troops were sent on board British vessels only to re-enter the Peninsula, once more to meet us in the field, it was with sincere gratification that I saw them depart.

One of these French officers I had known on board. His amiable manners had distinguished him amongst his companions. He had imprudently landed, for the purpose of paying me a farewell visit. Although out of uniform, the populace recognized him, and he disappeared. No tidings could be obtained of him, and we concluded that he had fallen a victim to popular fury. Two days afterwards a *Gallego* put into my hand a scrap of paper, on which, in characters scarcely legible, I found that he was in a Portuguese dungeon. He was a British prisoner under the protection of our flag. I repaired to Sir Robert Wilson, and obtained full authority to seek for and demand him. In vain I visited every gaol, and questioned every gaoler, he was not to be found. At last, by threats I entered the prison of the French taken by the Portuguese. The sight was horrible. In dark and fetid dungeons, I beheld twelve or thirteen living skeletons tied to the wall; they were naked; their beards long and tangled; their hair waving wildly about them; their

appearance cadaverous ; with scarcely the semblance of a human form. They were too weak to supplicate for food or assistance ; their chains alone supported them in an erect position ; but for those bonds they must have been prostrated on the pestilential ground. As I examined them with a torch, the only words that some of them could faintly articulate, were "*Oh, mon Dieu ! ayez pitié de moi.*" I thought that my heart-strings would have broken ; when on a sudden a poor wretch sprang up from the mud and filth on which he was crawling, and exclaimed in a voice which I immediately recognized, "*Me voilà, mon ami, me voilà !*"

It was my poor prisoner. The gaoler reluctantly loosened his fetters ; in a moment he pressed me in his arms, and bathed me with a torrent of tears, exclaiming in rapturous gratitude, "*Oh mon sauveur ! que mon Adélaïde t'aimera !*" When I thought that he associated the idea of his liberation, nay his restoration to liberty and life, with the remembrance of his beloved, whom he had left in France, I



was weak enough to mingle my tears with his.

But fresh horrors were in store. When the other miserable captives saw us about to depart, the groans they uttered were indescribable; they will ever ring in my ears, "*Et nous, et nous !*" they all exclaimed in agony. Alas ! they were Portuguese prisoners ; and were left to perish in all the pangs of hunger and despair. The rights of nations were respected, and the ponderous gates of their dungeon were closed upon death in all its terrors. Entreaties were useless ; the Portuguese replied " you may fulfil the articles of Cintra, and do what you like with *your* prisoners,—we shall treat *our* prisoners as we think proper."

The mind sickens at the bare recollection of such scenes ; yet when we reflect on the atrocities committed in Portugal by the French troops, especially by those under Loison, still held in execration by the inhabitants, can we be surprised at their vindictive conduct. Neither age nor sex had been respected ; they were galled to madness on seeing the plunder of

their invaders protected by our arms ; desperation added to their ferocity, and for centuries the British name will be detested by many in the land.

Greville gradually recovered and was ordered to England. With what a heavy heart I saw him depart ! how many instructions did I not give him, when he should see my beloved Ann. I sent her a sword, that I had taken from a French officer ; a cross of the legion of honour ; various trinkets that I had purchased in the *Rue des Flores*, out of my slender means ; and oh ! when I looked on Greville, I envied those eyes that would so soon be gazing upon hers : while her last words *Adieu for ever !* again and again rushed upon my thoughts.

These idle reminiscences, may appear trivial to those who have not loved—to those who have not been betrayed ; but the recollection of injured faith is like the mocking bird of the tangled wilderness, it can only repeat notes of desolation and despair.

Frank Greville sailed ; and I returned disconsolate to my quarters.

The events that followed the battle of Vimiero are well known. Our brigade was employed in the gallant passage of the Douro, and subsequently moved up the country under the command of the brave General M^c Kenzie.

During all these anxious operations, I frequently heard from Ann. She had seen Frank Greville, spoke of him in the highest terms of commendation, but owned that she was selfish and cruel enough to have wished that I had been wounded, and consequently sent home instead of him. One of the expressions in her letter solaced the pangs of absence ; they were alas, prophetic ! “ Without you,” she said, “ I feel that my existence is a blank ; I feel that my wretched days will end, should I be doomed *ne’er to see you more.*”


Affectionate as these words might be, I knew not how it was, but I fancied the other parts of her letter were couched in a restrained manner ; her style appeared more studied and to flow less from the burning thoughts of the

moment than from preparatory reflection. The physiology of love presents curious phenomena. At a moment when the expressions of those we love breathe the most angelic vows, an unknown monitor seems to advise us to be on our guard. Ann's letters, as I have just said, had never been more tenderly worded, yet dark suspicions began to hover over my mind, until then as serene as a summer sky. Her letters became less frequent; her fond expressions more abridged. How trifles agitate the suspicious mind! yet, as our poet says, they were to me 'confirmation strong,' although I often accused myself of injustice, in suspecting one who for me had sacrificed every future prospect in life.

I now began to feel the pangs of jealousy when I reflected on the superiority of Greville's fortune and attainments, his high breeding and brilliant prospects: in short, I was miserable. His letters to me were frequent; at first he spoke in raptures of Ann's beauty and accomplishments, but gradually he was less

lavish in her praise, and at last seldom spoke of her; indeed, he had left Maidstone where I was somewhat surprised to find that he had remained for a considerable time. His letters bore the post mark of London, and sometimes of York, his native town. A circumstance now occurred of a most trivial nature, but to me it was most perplexing. In one of his letters from York I recognized some Dutch paper that I had purchased at a custom house sale in Rochester, and which I left with Ann. The quality of the paper, its foreign water-mark, fixed my attention, and seemed to corroborate my fears.

In the following month of April he joined us. Our meeting was as friendly as ever in appearance, yet I felt myself constrained in my expressions of gratification, and I fancied that he appeared embarrassed. As may naturally be supposed, our first conversation turned upon Ann, and methought his countenance displayed symptoms of uneasiness when he pronounced her name. When we seek to read



in the features of those we suspect, causes of suspicion, the slightest curl of the lip, or deviation of a look, speak volumes. Yet I would often curse my jealous disposition when Ann's letters arrived, couched if possible in more affectionate language than ever.

My friendly intercourse with Greville was renewed, and in a very short time, I had resumed my former tranquillity of mind. We were rapidly advancing upon the Spanish capital; and each day that brought us nearer to Madrid, rendered our hopes of future success more buoyant, and cheered the soldiers in their fatiguing marches. My spirits had never flowed in a higher tide, but I observed that Greville became taciturn and unhappy. He seemed rather to avoid me; till at last I could not help questioning him upon this peculiarity of manner, by asking if I had done any thing which could have occasioned this coolness. He grasped my hand with an uncommon degree of energy, and exclaimed, "No, Merton—no: but an unaccountable gloom hangs over

me, and I feel that ere long I shall be numbered with the dead. When I am no more, think kindly of me, if you can."

I was thunderstruck at the manner in which this speech was delivered, and began to fear that his intellects were slightly impaired. That very evening I received a letter from Ann more tender than ever, and I endeavoured in every possible manner to soothe my friend's uneasiness, which I fancied might have arisen from some infidelity on the part of the person to whom he was attached in England, but whose name he never had mentioned to me.

Our army was now concentrated around Placentia, where we arrived on the 10th of July; Victor was in our front, and we hourly expected to move on against him. However, my hope of a speedy arrival at Madrid was damped by the conversation I had with the officers of the Lusitanian legion, whose active services on the frontier of Portugal had excited the utmost admiration and confidence on the part of the inhabitants. From these already

experienced officers, I learnt that the rear of our army was threatened by the corps of Soult and Ney, who would unquestionably penetrate by the mountain passes of Perales and Baños, and cut off our communication with Portugal, unless they were safely guarded. Sir Robert Wilson had offered to occupy these important points with which his legion was well acquainted ; but his proposals were rejected on the plea of their being already in possession of a body of Spaniards, whom Beresford was to have supported with the Portuguese.


On the 18th we broke up, and two days after joined the Spanish army under the command of the imbecile Cuesta ;—the French rapidly retreated before us, and on the following morning we drove their rear guard out of Talaveyra. They were falling back upon their resources, and the reinforcements they expected from Madrid and Toledo. This was the moment to attack them, and Wellington would have led on his ardent troops, had it not been for the objections and hesitation of the besotted Spanish chief.

Cuesta was a worn-out, obstinate old man; in such a decrepid state of body, that he could not mount a horse without the assistance of a chair or his aides-de-camp, and such was his moral incapacity, that he would fall into a lethargic sleep while in a council of the utmost importance, when in fact the vital interests of his country were discussed. With all the natural jealousy of his countrymen, he could not brook the idea of co-operating with us; and anxious that the laurels of victory should only be culled by native warriors, he determined to pursue the enemy without our aid. His troops in consequence, moved forward with bombastic pomp and shouts of victory on the 24th, looking at our men with ineffable contempt as they marched on to glory, and the utter discomfiture of the French forces. On the 26th how altered was the scene!—scarcely had the enemy, perceiving that the Spaniards were not supported by their forces, made a stand and sharply attacked them in turn, than these heroes fled in every direction, throwing away

their arms and ammunition. Indeed they would have been annihilated had not the Duke d'Albuquerque rushed on to their support with fresh troops, and had the French considered themselves in sufficient force to offer battle to our army, which moved to support the fugitive rabble.

Notwithstanding this disgraceful occurrence, such was the insolent vanity of the Spanish general, who only awoke from his slumber to roar out *carajo*, and then fall asleep again, that not satisfied with this lesson, he sought to urge Lord Wellington to encounter the enemy in the most unfavourable position, with a river in its rear, and which even an experienced corporal would at once have considered untenable.

All the promises of assistance, such as providing provisions, and means of transport, so often made by the Spaniards, had been shamefully broken. Our troops were actually starving while the Spanish troops were abundantly supplied, and the granaries of the Vera de Placencia were full of corn. In fact, it was



evident that the sole desire of our cowardly allies was to see us disgraced, that they might have the only claim to victory ! Our indignant chief very wisely rejected the driveller's proposals, and took up a good position near the town of Talaveyra. Soon afterwards the whole Spanish army was tumbling upon us in utter confusion in consequence of the advance of the enemy, and instead of exterminating the French, they were glad to throw themselves under our protection.

It was now evident that the French intended to act on the offensive. This plan of operation was most erroneous, and arose from the impatience of King Joseph and General Victor, who were flushed with the advantage they had obtained over the Spaniards, and who hoped that their formidable army now reinforced, would be more than sufficient to overthrow the British. Had the enemy awaited the arrival of Soult, Ney, and Mortier in our rear, we must have recrossed the Tagus or have been surrounded.

On the 27th our brigade under General M'Kenzie was sent forward to occupy a wood on the right of the Alberche. As usual, no picquets, no vedettes had been thrown out, and we were busily occupied in cooking our dinner and even unpacking our baggage, when a cloud of French *voltigeurs* burst upon us, opening a destructive fire from tree-tops and hedges. In an instant our brigade retreated in confusion, and would no doubt have been cut to pieces but for the timely arrival of Colonel Donkin's corps, which steadily checked the further advance of the enemy.

It was at this critical moment that Greville, who stood near me, received a mortal wound; and by one of those singular accidents of war, the ball which killed him wounded me, lodging under my hip. It had entered his back, and passed through the upper part of his thigh before it had struck me. I fell, and was instantly surrounded by a party of French soldiers; in a moment my poor friend was stripped of every particle of his clothes, and they were proceeding to prevent me from ever being

recognised by my garments, when perceiving an officer amongst them, and recollecting the ties of freemasonry, I threw out the *sign of succour*, and in an instant a surgeon and two officers took me under their protection. I was carefully removed to a hut or wig-wam, that had most likely been erected by our Spanish allies, and the medical officer who was with me, proceeded to dress my wound. The ball that had been flattened in its progress, was carefully extracted ; but his experience did not allow this operation to be satisfactory, and he discovered with his probe, that some other foreign body had been driven in by the missile. After much careful research, to my utter surprise, he drew forth from the wound a small portion of a red morocco pocket-book, which had been in the pocket of Greville's trousers when he was hit, and which had no doubt been driven in by the ball.

This was a curious incident, but the French surgeon told me that such occurrences were by no means uncommon*. The singularity of the

* Lest the reader should imagine that such a circum-

circumstance, however, induced me, when I recovered from the pain of the operation, to examine the ball and the fragment of the pocket-book, which I intended carefully to preserve, in order to present to my dear Anne, as a singular remembrance of war. Several folds of the morocco had been thus cut out; these I carefully separated, and found between them a small portion of a letter: but judge of my amazement, when on that small scrap, I recognized the words—MR. MERTON—and on a second fold—DEAR FRANK, in Anne's hand writing.

My agony of mind upon thus, I may say, miraculously obtaining a knowledge of her perfidy, may be easily imagined. It brought on an attack of illness which nearly termi-

stance is one of those marvels only to be found in romance, I will here relate a fact which occurred at the battle of Waterloo. In this memorable battle, a five franc piece, was thus driven into the wound of one of our men, by a ball that had killed his comrade, in whose pocket the money had been contained. This coin actually bent in, is preserved in the Army Medical Museum at Chatham, as a curious instance of the course of projectiles.

nated my existence; but the kindness of the French surgeon relieved me, and perceiving by my agitation that the perusal of the fragment of paper had occasioned the accident, he begged to know if he could in any manner serve me. I was a tolerable French scholar, and related to him the singular occurrence; when he immediately took up his hat and left me exclaiming:

“The body of your comrade has no doubt been stripped, but all your baggage is taken; that of your comrade must be amongst it—for you English march to battle like housekeepers on a move. Give me his name, and I will endeavour to throw more light upon this affair which appears to trouble you so much.”

He was true to his word, that very evening he brought me Greville's valise. Every object of value had been rifled; but his papers tied up in a bundle remained untouched. Alas! it contained numerous letters from the miserable deceiver, and a lock of her hair.

I was agonised; my new French friends laughed at the circumstance, while the surgeon exclaimed with a jocose smile:

"Ma foi ! mon officier, Françaises ou Anglaises, il paraît qu'elles sont toutes de la même étoffe."

This truly philosophical observation did not solace my wretched state of mind, and to convince myself more forcibly of what appeared to me a dream, I read and reperused the letters of the perfidious girl, scarcely able to believe that hypocrisy could have been carried on to such an extent. I was more convinced of the depth of her duplicity by the following passage :

"Mr. Merton is of an ardent romantic disposition. Spain had always been to him a sort of fairy land, and I feel convinced, that when he moves in the society of its bewitching women, I shall soon be forgotten. Give me the earliest intimation, my dear Frank, of such adventures, that I may avail myself of it, to break off with him, leaving all the apparent wrongs on his side. In the meantime, I must continue to write to him as usual. I offered to unite my destinies to his—fortunately he

declined my hand—in the cold calculation of expected promotion! considering my father's prudent advice more persuasive than, my childish love—a silly passion which I hope that the husband of my heart and my reason, will forget, or at any rate forgive. Your unhappy Anne will never know a moment's bliss, until she is thine and thine only. Until then, take care of yourself, and recollect that the fatal blow that might strike you, will strike her!"

The perfidious girl was prophetic as regarded herself! I sealed up all her letters, enclosed in the same packet the ball that had struck her beloved, the fragment of his pocket-book, with no other communication from me than a detail of his death and the accident which undeceived me. The French officers were as anxious as myself to forward this proof of her falsehood, and the general of the brigade actually sent in a flag of truce for the purpose.

I shortly after heard, when at Verdun, of the

arrival of my parcel. Miss Colville had scarcely opened it, when she fell senseless to the ground ; a brain fever followed, and she expired in a delirious state a few days afterwards."

" Well, Merton," observed one of our officers, " you must endeavour to attach a similar character of prophecy to the false girl's other predictions, and when we march into Madrid, seek to forget her in some adventure with a fair Spaniard."

" Never—never," I replied ; " if a girl so highly educated, so sensitive, could be thus false, what could I expect from women, who know no other guide than their own passions."

" There it is, my dear fellow," continued my comrade ; " there lay your errors ; what you call passions is the mere impulse of nature. Your high flown romantic love, found in highly civilized countries, is all art ; and love is studied in books and songs instead of the language of the heart. Believe me, the girl who will shed tears at a romance or novel, a dying butterfly or a

sinking kitten, will not weep long for an absent lover. I have lately heard of such an instance of Spanish devotion, that I am hard at work studying the language, the guitar, and, by the Lord Harry to please my good old methodistical mother, I shall convert some Castilian maid to the true faith, and take her home with me. She shall be taught to sing psalms, and in return she'll teach my English friends the fandango, the cachucha and the castagnets."

"And who is this wonderful instance of Spanish fidelity," replied I.

"Do you recollect that a few days ago, a French dragoon officer came over to our lines."

"Ay, a dastardly deserter."

"Not quite so fast: he gave me his history to exonerate him from the foul charge of abandoning his colours, and when, with your permission, I shall have read it, you will consider him I feel convinced a very fine fellow. At any rate, such I consider him to be, so much so indeed, that as he is about to embark at Lisbon for England, I have given him introductory letters to my family."

Our officers had formed such an idea of Spanish women, that with a doubtful smile and significant shrug, they expressed a wish to hear the adventures of this paragon of women ; their merry companion proceeded to read the following account, observing that " there are some friendly bits of advice to *us*, which we might do well in attending to."

THE BILLET.

CHAPTER I.

THE basest crime of which a soldier can be guilty, is unquestionably desertion before the enemy. Every army justly condemns such offenders to immediate death—they are abandoned by their countrymen—despised by their enemies. Yet there are circumstances when such conduct may be palliated: such has been my case.

There is scarcely an officer in the legions of France that does not condemn the impolitic invasion of Spain, and mourn over the excesses committed by the wanton soldiery; ex-

cesses which may sometimes be extenuated on the plea of a necessary retaliation, but at which humanity shudders.

Generally speaking, we are detested by the inhabitants, who beheld in us the invaders of their liberties and their independence as a nation, doomed under the sway of our Emperor, to form another gem in his diadem. Yet individually we have frequently met with friends who, conscious that we were the reluctant actors in the tragic scenes passing around us, showed us more pity than hate. Such was often the sentiment of the Spanish ladies, who finding the society of our gay officers more pleasing than that of their jealous countrymen, or even of your stately and proud Englishmen, seemed to forget in the individual, the crimes of the nation to which he belonged.

Love is an anomalous sentiment. It knows neither friend nor foe, acknowledges no country, embraces no party, and frequently prevails over religious and political animosities ; for, however the tenets of the fair may have been tinged by superstition, Love is in itself

a religion—a worship ; and the sacrifice of all personal feelings seems to be the most welcome offering at the sainted shrine of this all powerful idol.

My regiment was quartered in Toledo, and I received a billet on a grandee of the royal house, a hidalgo of the *Casa Real*, whose distinguished name of Oropesa has been registered for centuries in the noblest annals of Castille.

On my arrival, he gave orders that every attention should be shown me. One of the best chambers in his mansion was allotted to me, and my repasts ordered at the hours I thought proper to direct. Still I saw not my host—he had retired to his apartments, and evidently sought to avoid any intercourse with one of the enemies of his country. He no doubt thought me as great an enemy to his religion, since a crucifix and several paintings of sainted martyrs were removed from my room, so soon as I had taken possession of it, and the scroll bearing the mystic inscription of *Ave Maria purissima, sin peccado concebida*, had been taken down from my door.

I saw but little of my brother officers, seldom visited the coffee-houses or *fundas*, generally declined invitations to the gay *tertulias* of this classic and antique city, but spent most of my time in studying the language, learning the guitar, and singing to it many fond romances, that I had heard in my own country in happier days, when in the society of a young lady to whom I was betrothed.

My landlord, I soon found from a Galician servant, more loquacious than his Castilian companions, had a daughter renowned for her great beauty and accomplishments, and who was on the point of being married to a nobleman of an ancient lineage as proud as her own. Don Pablo de Placentia, the personage alluded to was a colonel in the Spanish army, who was just recovering from a severe wound which he had received in action with us, the pangs of which tended not a little to add to the abhorrence in which he held every thing that was French.

The window of my room opened into the gallery of the court or *patio*, shaded with

orange and lime trees, under which the bubbling waters of a crystal fountain were continually playing, adding to the delicious freshness of the scene. Here would Don Pablo frequently sit, sometimes smoking his cigar, at other moments singing national songs, insulting to my country.

To me these opprobrious allusions were immaterial—I knew too well that we deserved them; but the soldiers who attended me, and my non-commissioned officers who constantly brought me the orderly-book, could scarcely brook the taunts of the Castilian; and I feared that their irritation might compromise his safety. One evening, therefore, while he was pouring forth bitter strains against the *gavachos*, I descended into the court-yard and addressed him with much politeness, and in a manner which I thought best calculated to convey my sentiments without giving offence.

“Although I have not the honour of being acquainted with you, Señor,” I calmly began, “I have taken the liberty of addressing you on a subject which might ultimately affect

my honour; since if any mishap occurred to you, it might be attributed to acts which would be most foreign to my thoughts. I know too well how much I ought to respect the rights of hospitality, and appreciate the attention that I have received from my noble host; and therefore I do beseech you, not to expose your life or liberty by a continuation of useless aggressions, which in your situation are fraught with peril."

"Honor! hospitality!" he replied with a contemptuous sneer, without rising from his seat; "I thought these expressions were erased from a Frenchman's vocabulary."

"Your language is severe, Señor," I replied, "yet situated as we are I readily forgive you your unjust insinuations."


"Forgive *me!*" he exclaimed drawing himself up with all the dignity of offended pride, "forgive *me*, Don Pablo de Placencia! May I ask," he added with a bitter look of ineffable contempt, "whom I have the high honor of addressing?"

“ Captain de Crecy, Señor, of the 26th dragoons, and officer of the Legion of Honor.”

“ And no doubt of an illustrious origin : your voice is admirable, your romances most interesting ; you must have been a loss to some of your country’s theatres.”

The insolence of this reply made the blood rush in an impetuous tumult to my mantling cheeks ; still I assumed sufficient command over myself to check any act of violence, and firmly replied :

“ Don Pablo, I scorn your insults, as I would scorn your sword if circumstances permitted me to make you repent this language. The name of Crecy, is at least equal in heraldic honor to that of any Spaniard. My father was a count, my mother a daughter of a duke, and both fell a sacrifice to those sad times, that shrouded my country in mourning. Still, Sir, I did not condemn unhappy France for the excesses of some unnatural Frenchmen ; and although the land of my birth had been crimsoned by the blood of my parents, I have ever been as ready to shed mine in its defence, as



I am now to spill it, in advocating my own and the honor of my country."

These words, delivered with stern energy, acted like a magic spell. Don Pablo slightly lifted his broad *sombrero* from his brow, and rising from his seat, replied evidently with much emotion :

" Cavaliero, I regret the hasty expressions that I have used. If you still feel offended, I am ready to give you any satisfaction that you may demand, since we can cross our steel upon an equal footing."

" Señor," I answered, " at other times I should already have demanded at the sword's point, the satisfaction you now have offered. But my blood in the present sad conflict belongs to France, and is not to be idly shed in personal broils. If either of us survive the present war, Don Pablo de Placencia will easily find Jean de Crecy, should not de Crecy have already sought him to fling back with contempt his foul aspersions."

" Your hand, Sir," he replied : " the sooner we may meet the better; mistake me not, Señor ;

I abhor your country and your countrymen, but my hate to you is personal, and mark me *Sir*, whether it be on the battle field or in the duel's list, I will seek you, until one of us shall fall."

So saying he saluted me with dignity and withdrew, leaving me perfectly amazed at the singularity of his parting speech.

Don Pablo was to me a perfect stranger, I never could have given him any offence ; yet his language denounced me as a personal enemy. The following day I was seated in my chamber, playing as usual on my guitar, and singing the romance of "*C'est toujours toi*," which had been the favourite of Coralie, the girl to whom I had been betrothed in my own dear city of Toulouse, when one of the upper servants of my landlord entered the chamber and respectfully delivered a letter from his master. It was written in French, and purported that as he had been imposed by the *alcalde* with more billets than fell to his share, he had begged leave to procure me other quarters, which he hoped would not be found inferior to those that I occupied. A billet was en-

closed, and I found it was upon a Countess d'Avila, whose house was the resort of the few gay personages of Toledo, and whose opinions, moreover, were suspected of being somewhat in favor of the French cause.

Under other circumstances I might and probably should have objected to this arrangement; but feeling myself in a false position, while residing under the same roof as Don Pablo, who was affianced to the daughter of my host, I did not hesitate in sending a polite reply in which I expressed my sincere hope, that no act of mine could have induced him to wish for my departure from his house.

I was proceeding to pack up my valise when my ear was struck with a prelude on the piano, an instrument not commonly found in Spain, and which announced a superior ornamental education in the possessor, and soon a lovely female voice breathed a plaintive Spanish romance. It appeared to me a magic sound: for a more expressive or softer murmur had never fallen upon my ear.

My servant was with me, he smiled at my surprise and told me that the voice was that

of my landlord's daughter, the lovely Donna Maria, whom he familiarly called by the name of Mariquita la Maravilla.

Her former silence, her present action in thus shedding a romantic mystery on my departure, struck me as being very singular. I questioned Mercier, my trusty follower, who confessed that he had often seen the lovely girl's dark eyes peeping at my window, through the lattice work of her verandah, and that her maid Barbara, had put to him many questions concerning me. Yet I had never seen her, except when closely *tapada*, or wrapped in her mantilla, she had glided through the hall wending her mincing steps towards the cathedral; and although I admired the beautiful symmetry of her figure, and her lofty and airy bearing, her features were to me unknown; indeed, she seemed to shun me as sedulously as her proud father.

Now the expressions of Don Pablo flashed across my recollection, with a sudden gleam rendered perhaps more vivid by that vanity which is innate in all men, but perhaps more

acutely amongst my gay and intriguing countrymen ; and I fancied that jealousy, however unfounded, had induced the insolent grandee to call me his personal enemy. At first I felt disposed to prolong my residence in a house from which I was in fact expelled ; but reason mastered the momentary inclination to act dishonorably, and I hastened to my new quarters.

CHAPTER II.

CHANGE OF QUARTERS.

The Countess d'Avila was a lady of a middle age, who once had led the fashion at the Escorial and Aranjuez, and who had numbered amongst her *cortejos*, the most accomplished and noble cavaliers of Spain. Donna Palmira, (that was her name) received me with that frankness and familiar ease that distinguish the high bred Spanish lady, and greeting me with an affable *bien venido*, adding that she had heard much to my advantage, directed her *camarista*, to have me shewn to my apartments.

The chamber I occupied displayed rich and massive furniture, and on my marble table were piles of delicious fruits with flagons of Malaga and Val de Penas wines, while on the

shelves of a small book case, I found a choice collection of French and Spanish works.

The chaplain of the house, a *canonigo* of the cathedral, attended me, and begged in the name of the noble mistress of the mansion, that I might consider all that the house afforded as my own. A dinner, evidently prepared by a French *artiste*, was served up; and my servant Mercier swore that we had alighted in a *pays de Cogne*.

In the evening I was summoned to her Tertullia, where dressed *à la Française*, in the last Parisian style, and adorned with splendid diamonds, the Countess received the principal officers of the French garrisons and all the civil authorities appointed by King Joseph. Spanish dances were followed by their national quadrilles, and the waltz succeeded the bolero, the guaracha and the seguaddilla: while delicious fruits, ices, ice water and *sponjadas*, were profusely sent round. The ladies did not display the majestic beauties of Andalusia, but their affable manner in conversation with our officers, gave them a greater merit in our

eyes. It was only when alone, that the Spanish women would relax from the assumed rigidity which distinguished them in public, where it was necessary to show their jealous countrymen that they looked upon us, as their natural enemies, and only yielded to the common laws of courtesy when politely receiving our flattering addresses.

All was gay, and brilliant, and fascinating to men who had so long been used to the wretched bivouac, or to dull village cantonment; yet I did not participate in the general hilarity. The scene around me appeared to me unnatural—mine ear could not hear with delight, expressions of mirth and levity, pronounced in the same language that had so often and so vainly sued for mercy and compassion, when our ruthless soldiers spared neither age nor sex; and when we unbuckled our sabres to be more free in the waltzes rapid movements, I could not but reflect that their bright blades had been often crimsoned with the best blood of Spain.

The Countess d'Avila was a Sevillian, and

displayed all the fascinating charms that distinguished the ladies of that gay city, from the rest of their fair countrywomen. She was no longer in the prime of youth, but that fire of the dark and vivid eye, that even age cannot dim, still sparkled through the dark veil of her long and fringed lids; the aquiline nose and broad and open forehead were still commanding, and a beauteous smile playing round a mouth, which might perhaps, have appeared somewhat too large to fastidious eyes, seemed to assist a lovely set of teeth in pleading indulgence for this only defect in features of classic beauty. Her attention to me was so marked, that they excited general remark, and my comrades considered me from that moment *en bonnes fortunes*.

Gradually the party withdrew, and I was invited by my fascinating hostess, to a supper provided by Father Bento, a *bon vivant*, who seemed as anxious to attend to the corporal comfort of every individual in the house as for the future welfare of their spiritual part. The countess retired early to rest, and left me in

company with the merry priest, who, while he amused me with the recital of various amorous Toledian adventures, in many of which, he had borne a conspicuous part, endeavoured, over ample potations of excellent wines and liqueurs, and an abundant supply of Havannah cigars, to make himself acquainted with my situation in life; when I did not hesitate in informing him, that ere I had left France, my vows had been plighted. He smiled at the earnest manner in which I made this declaration, and with a shrewd look, asked me if it had not been my admiration of Donna Maria d'Oropesa, that had led to my expulsion from her father's house. He appeared surprised, when I informed him that I had not even seen her; when he observed that I surely could not be a real Frenchman, since as he assured me, *non hay muchacha mas guapa debaxo del sol*,* and that Don Pablo de Placencia was considered the most fortunate man in Spain, the more so as he was undeserving of such a *maravilla*,

* There is not a more beauteous girl under the sun.



being nothing better than a *papelon*,* and he endeavoured to confirm a most minute description of her charms and accomplishments by singing me a sonnet he had composed upon them, and which he accompanied with much taste on the guitar.

Day had dawned ere we broke up our *tête-à-tête*; and as I retired to my chamber, and endeavoured to sleep, strange fantasies crossed my brain in all the cruel, yet flattering imagery of morning dreams. I experienced a singular curiosity to behold this paragon of beauty, under whose roof I had so long remained, and again felt that I had submitted to an indignity in quitting a quarter which I had a right to retain.

Next day, as I expected, the Countess rallied me on my fidelity in her usual lively manner, and requested me to describe this object of my chivalric attachment, and on learning that I had the portrait of Coralie, desired me in so earnest a manner to see it, that I could not refuse so simple a request. As she received the minia-

* A braggard.

ture—raising her brow and pursing her lips—I fancied that I could read in her countenance, the true meaning of her observation, *non es tam feia* !* which in fact was a qualified admission of beauty ; and after turning the portrait in different points of view, she closed the morocco case and returned it to me with a smile.

“ Do you think, Don Juan,” she said, “ that those golden locks and those blue eyes offer attractions greater than the dark beauties of our southern sky ; that the languid look of female weakness can inspire the same noble and generous emotion that the gazelle glance of Andalusia can kindle in a manly heart ? You may have loved, Señor, you may have fancied that your affections have been requited—yet, believe me in your highly civilised countries—your polished France, these professions of attachment, this belief in the power of love, and the disposition to yield to its dictates, is the mere result of a romantic education, taught by books instead of hearts, and art instead of nature. Happily in our own delicious Spain, these accomplish-

* She is not so plain.

ments, which only tend to aid the fascination of coquettish skill, are little attended to ; our religion and our love, are our chief—our only occupations ; and we are taught in the holy mysteries of both these shrines, to adore celestial beings, as fervently as we can idolize the creator's noblest work—a brave and generous man.”

“ I fully agree with you, Señora,” I replied, “ that the character of the French ladies differs widely from that of the enchanting women of Spain. Nay, I should say, had their education been equally attended to, their fascination would be so great, that it is perhaps in mercy that their attainments have not been cultivated with equal care.”

“ This is Parisian flattery, cavalier ; I know your country well, but I now speak with the frankness of a Spaniard, distant and haughty like the proud English with strangers, and those with whom they feel that they cannot commune ; but candid and guileless with those who like you, inspire confidence and esteem ; tell me then, how does it happen that you were

not married to this lady of your constant thoughts?"

"In my country, Madam, by a regulation of the Emperor, no officer is allowed to change his condition, without a special permission."

"A permission to love!"

"No, Señora, but to marry."

"I readily admit the case is different."

"Moreover, the Lady Coralie du Plessis, whom you have called in chivalric language, the lady of my thoughts, would not be allowed to marry me, until I had obtained an independent rank in life."

"*-Va usted con Dios !*" exclaimed my fair catechiser, "you call this love! A Spanish woman would trample under foot your Emperor's decree, dare her family, laugh to scorn the rigors of fortune, would follow her lover through all the perils of the war, stand by him in the deadly breach, and avenge his fall with the knife."

The impressive, and I may say fierce manner in which Donna Palmira delivered this

energetic speech, puzzled me as much as the general tenure of this extraordinary conversation, and I began to fancy, that I had produced an impression upon her volcanic mind, that I by no means would have wished to inspire.

“ I observed last night,” she continued, “ that you did not seem to partake of the general cheerfulness; nay, it did not surprise me, since no doubt your thoughts had flown beyond our Pyrenees; but at the same time I plainly perceived that other sentiments cast a gloom over your preoccupied mind.”

“ Truly, Madam, I understand you not; think me not so void of feeling, or so blind to beauty’s attractions, as not to have experienced delight in the society of Donna Palmira, and proud of the distinction with which she honoured a stranger.”

“ Nay, Don Juan, no deceit with me. You seemed surprised to find our Spanish ladies so affable towards the bitterest enemies of our country—men stained with the blood of our nearest and dearest friends. There again, you know not the character of a Spanish woman ;

she is too noble minded not to believe that under that hostile uniform, may beat high a generous heart, indignant at the misery inflicted by an ambitious tyrant, and ever ready to shed a tear, for the very blood his hand has been obliged to spill in the horrors of a conflict, which an unjust and barbarous invasion has brought on. We too well know that your fierce warriors, trained in all the miseries of war, cannot understand that the assassin's dagger which stabs the straggler—that the poisoned meal that awaits the weary and wayworn trooper—the fatal well that destroys the fevered and thirsty soldier—are merely acts of retaliation on the part of our people, embittered and rendered fiercer by their inability to meet in the field your veteran legions. He forgets that the ruthless peasant who waylays his solitary path, when he dares venture from his protecting ranks, avenges a murdered father—a dishonoured wife—a degraded daughter ;—that blood and blood alone can wipe off from their once spotless brow, the foul badge of infamy which even violence cannot obliterate in me-

mory's burning throes. And yet regardless of your own aggressions, you deem us all a savage race, heedless of the laws of nations, that you first violated, and strangers to that humanity which you first trampled under your ensanguined feet. We are more generous, cavalier, and when we meet men, who like you, exert themselves to check those fearful excesses, and to render war less pitiless—we can distinguish such an individual from his reckless companions, and in a Frenchman's redeeming qualities, endeavour, if possible, to moderate the thirst of revenge, which the deeds of France inspire."

A summons to divine service now interrupted our conversation, and I accompanied my strange hostess to the cathedral, where she joined the dark groups of devotees, kneeling on the splendid tessellated pavement, while I wandered about the magnificent basilic until the mass was over.

I rejoined Donna Palmira at the entrance, and she said :


" I must now introduce you, Señor, to one of the most interesting establishments in Spain,

the college of noble damsels : there perhaps you may meet with attractions, that may make you forget your good city of Toulouse, its floral games and even your Coralie."

This proposal surprised me more than her pious conversation. I had heard much of the *collegio de las donzellas nobles*, and knew it was not easy to obtain admission within its privileged walls.

We were politely received by the superior, whom we found in the principal parlour, surrounded by a group of ladies of various ages, dressed uniformly in a collegiate costume, of white robes bound with light blue sashes, but allowed to let their dark tresses flow in any manner they fancied best calculated to set off their charms, for many of them might have been considered fair specimens of national beauty.

I must do these ladies the justice to say, that so soon as they heard the clattering of my sabre, and beheld the well known and dreaded green uniform, and the brilliant helm of our dragoons, they rose with evident marks of apprehension and displeasure, and sweeping out



of the room with a haughty look of contempt, left me with the superior.

Refreshments of the most delicious kind were served, and Donna Palmira asked for a young lady, who had just entered the establishment. A bell was rang, and shortly after, one of the most beauteous girls I had ever beheld entered the room; there was no timidity in her looks; she dropped a gracious curtesy, and proceeded to embrace with much apparent friendship my enigmatic guide, who introduced me to the lovely stranger in a playful manner, observing that I was an exception to the *gavachos*; —a heavenly smile played on the countenance of the enchanting novice—who again dropping a salutation which would have become the most courtly Parisian lady, cast upon me a look of more than mortal sweetness. To describe her would be an idle effort; she was gifted with all the charms that the most eloquent *Romancéros* and poets of Spain could have recorded in their amorous and enthusiastic productions.

Her conversation, in which she was by no means chary, displayed both elegance and

strength of mind. She spoke the French language fluently, and having asked me if I were not fond of music and a musician, she requested me to favour her with some of my country's romances ; so saying she handed me a guitar, and with a tremulous voice, I endeavoured to sing the well known ditty of the *Troubadour*. She then asked me, if I did not know the romance of *C'est toujours toi* ; and I observed a vivid blush mantling her dark yet transparent cheek, as she spoke. As I obeyed her command, (for the manner in which she put the questions partook more of an order than a request,) I observed that her emotion increased, and her eyes sparkled with a scintillating fire that kindled in my breast a sentiment of mingled admiration and awe, that I never had experienced ; and I must have evinced during the arduous task of seeking to display as much vocal talent and sentiment as I could command, a sense of confusion and inferiority before this truly superior being, that made me falter in my utterance, and I am sure, fail in my attempt. However, pre-

senting her the guitar in my turn, I humbly expressed my wish to hear one of her own favourite songs. Without hesitation she took the instrument, and after preluding over the chords, with a hand unequalled in any sculptor's *studio*, she sang the delicious *soneto* I had heard the day I quitted my last billet, and could have sworn that it was the same voice, which had struck me with such delight.

The bell for some church service interrupted our conversation, and we departed, not without having received the permission from the superior to renew my visits, and been promised some Spanish music in return for my French compositions that I might have by me.

The college of the noble damsels of Toledo is a strange institution ; destined for the education of young ladies of high birth, whose families might have laboured under difficulties preventing them from affording their daughters a tuition suitable to their station in life. Here they may receive their friends and visitors, may quit their sanctuary to be led to the altar, or spend their days in its well endowed town and

country houses. They were subject to certain collegiate regulations of no difficult fulfilment, and it has been even surmised, that some occasional imprudences were not visited with much severity, since the publicity given to such transgressions would only have injured the fair fame of the body corporate, without in the slightest degree repairing that of the individual delinquent.

As I returned to my quarters with the Countess, my silence evidently expressed the impression that this singular scene, I might say this vision of fairy land, had produced on all my faculties. Donna Palmira smiled with a look of satisfaction, in which methought I could discover a little tinge of malice ; but with the rapidity of one of her flashing glances, she recovered her wonted serenity, as she asked me what I thought of the noble damsel.

I expressed my admiration in as guarded a manner as politeness to another, but a more elderly beauty, prescribed ; but my amazement was not a little increased, when she informed me, that this enchanting girl was none other


than Donna Maria d'Oropesa; the only and the beauteous daughter of my late host, and justly surnamed *la Maravilla*.

Donna Palmira added to my surprise by informing me that Donna Maria had entered the college, in consequence of a warm altercation with her father, who was anxious to unite her to Don Pablo de Placentia, but whose hand she had refused, in the most peremptory manner, accompanying the rejection of his suit with a severity of language that had insulted the proud Castilian, as much as it had excited indignation in her noble father's mind; and she added with a look of severity, that bewildered all my speculative thoughts still more:—"I told you, Senhor Francez, that you know not the volcanic nature of a Spanish woman's heart. Her love is to be sought for as ardently as her hate is to be dreaded. Her impetuous will knows no bounds, and, like an overwhelming torrent, will sweep all before it, although she, and all that she holds sacred and dear, are hurled to destruction in the general wreck. The hot blood of the Moor still circulates in our veins, and beats

high in our heaving bosoms ; a romantic mixture of unruly passion and generosity characterizes our energies. The jealous Italian may avenge her wrongs and punish the scorn of the man she loves by all the various arts of destruction ; a nosegay, a glove may convey the dreadful poison ; or a bravo's arm strike the offender in dark security ;—not so with us : we must be our own avengers. The dagger which we carry in our girdles, or gartered on our limbs, must glisten in our own grasp ; and the blood that once circulated in the truant heart of the faithless, must crimson our own hand. Seek for such a character in your artificial France. *Demonios*,* we are not educated in boarding schools, where one meretricious inmate will, like the morbid sheep, contaminate the flock. We are not told by mothers that marriage will absolve us from all restraint. It is not in books that we are taught to love ; it is under the ardent rays of our glorious sun that we learn to live for love and for revenge."

There was something so energetic in the

* A common exclamation in Spanish conversation.



manner in which the Countess addressed me, that in the wild mazes in which my mind wandered, I fancied that I had been the subject of her vehement declamation. However, the mysterious nature of Don Pablo's conversation was now cleared up. The beautiful Maria had scornfully rejected his proffered hand, although long betrothed ; and some how or other, I had found myself in some manner (to me unaccountable) involved in the transaction. Anxious to know more, if possible, upon so important a subject, without putting any direct questions, I expressed my desire to know what sort of a man this Don Pablo might be. The Countess, with evident emotion and a tremulous tone, told me that he was a gambler, proud, intolerant, and vindictive, who gloried as much in his ancestral honors, as in his fortunate adventure in the Cytherean court, who had spurned the fairest and the wealthiest partners in Spain, until at last he was smitten with Donna Maria's superior attractions, and fallen a humble suppliant at her feet.

"He must then have had a more successful rival," I replied.

"You have said it, Senhor; she loves, and dares not avow her sentiments. She loves a man, who not only does not, but cannot return her affection; a man who scarcely knows her, and whose heart is betrothed to another; yet accustomed to triumph with a sway that she deems omnipotent, the proud girl has sworn, aye sworn by *la Virgen de Roncesvallés*, that the truant shall be hers, dead or alive."

I could not refrain from smiling at this furious resolution, so furiously depicted in looks and words by the Countess, who at the moment seemed fired with a Pythonessean energy; as she closed this singular conversation, by exclaiming again, "*Demonios*, she shall and will succeed;" and so saying she swept out of the room, leaving me to my conflicting thoughts.

It had been clearly intimated to me that Donna Maria loved a stranger, to whom she was unknown; and every circumstance seemed to confirm the idea that fancy and vanity whispered in mine ear that I was

that mysterious object of her still more mysterious partiality, and I resolved to see the adventure out. It would have stimulated into daring action any one less ardent than a young soldier, who, although bound by ties of honour to another, could not secede from such a call as Donna Maria's favour; and I must confess, I felt some gratification in thinking that I might have been instrumental in humiliating the proud and insolent hidalgo, who had offended me without provocation.

CHAPTER III.

THE MIRACLE.

I daily continued to visit Donna Maria, each day adding to her fascinations ; and I must confess that the enthusiastic admiration with which she inspired me was not a little fanned into a fiercer glow, by comparison with my countrywomen. Instead of their tortured hair being turned up from the roots, *à la chinoise*, or frizzed out in odious *coques*, or plaited in symmetrical *bandeaux*, the black hair of the beauteous girl hung naturally and in luxurious locks, only carelessly parted on her lovely forehead, to prevent it from waving over her black expressive eyes, from which beamed in the same ray gentleness and fierceness, mirror of

that anomalous and fervent soul that her friend had so expressively described. In short, I must confess it, the image of Coralie became each day more faint in my memory, until I thought and dreamed of nought but my enchanting Spaniard; as every interview convinced me more firmly that I had won her heart.

It was at this moment that the advance of the British army occasioned a correspondent movement amongst our troops, and my regiment received orders to hold itself in readiness to march at the first sound of the trumpet to move into Arragon.

I was busily employed in preparing for this departure, and it was with a heart as heavy as when I left my betrothed, when Donna Palmira entered my chamber; her looks were solemn yet energetic, and seating herself beside me, she thus addressed me in an impressive tone, which I shall never forget.

“ Don Juan, it is needless for me to inform you that you have won for ever the heart of hearts of my unhappy friend; with you her

destinies are cast; can you appreciate the extent of your happiness? nay, feel the pride that such a conquest must kindle in the most stoic bosom?"

"Señora," I replied, "I am free to confess that the discovery of the lovely Maria's affection for me, has not been viewed with indifference; nay, that under any other circumstances it would be my glory and my pride to call her mine; but I have told you, Madam, that an engagement sealed by a vow of honour, the oath of a soldier, who would prefer death to perjury, binds me in bonds so sacred, that no mortal power can dissolve them. For me, Mademoiselle du Plessis has refused the most flattering offers."

"And for *you*, silly fool, Maraquita has rejected the noblest hand in Castile: the proudest, the bravest, the most accomplished cavalier in Spain; for *you* she has incurred her father's hate; for *you* she is ready to submit to his malediction, nay, to the curse of all true Spaniards, who would consider her, by this unhallowed union, a perfidious recusant

of her altar and her country, the degraded captive—ay, the willing slave of one of our bitterest foes, of a Frenchman—whose name and country will be accursed from the cradle to the bed of death by future generations, while every generous Spaniard would feel it a duty to immolate both him and her, to appease the wandering spirits of their murdered brethren !”

“ I often times, Madam,” I answered, “ have expressed my surprise that these feelings founded on the most natural patriotic sentiments should not have arisen in the breast of every Spanish maid when inclination prompted her to forget her country’s wrongs in the occasional intercourse with an enemy. Had I, Donna Palmira, in any manner encouraged the growth of a passion, to me unknown, I should feel myself most embarrassed in not proving to Donna Maria that my sentiments were as honourable towards her as they had been to my betrothed.”

“ Enough, Señor, enough,” rejoined the haughty Countess, “ a Frenchman talk of ho-

nour! of fidelity!—a Frenchman whose only pride is a bit of red ribband steeped in virtuous blood, or the tears of woman, shed at the shrine of his insatiable vanity. You have sealed your doom, cavalier, farewell :”—so saying she moved out of the room, and left me in a labyrinth of difficulties.

I felt, despite all my endeavours to check the growing affection, that I dearly, too dearly, loved this strange girl: yet I firmly resolved to master my weakness.

The regiment was expected to march in a few days, and I sought some *distractions* from my uneasy and struggling feelings, by finishing in my sketch book various drawings I had commenced. One morning, I had taken a stroll to the beautiful cathedral, an edifice interesting in every respect, since in the sixth century a church had been erected on its site, afterwards converted into a mosque by the Moors, until it was finally rebuilt in the thirteenth century, in all its present imposing magnificence. I was seated on my folding camp stool, copying a strange picture over

one of the entrances of the cloister, and representing some men, dressed in an eastern costume, crucifying a young boy, while one of the executioners was drawing the youth's heart through a fearful gash in the side.

A stranger, enveloped in a dark mantle, approached me, and alternately looked at the painting and cast a passing glance on my drawing. At last he asked me if I understood the subject which the artist had thus committed to canvass ; on my reply in the negative, he proceeded to relate the following curious history.

“ You have heard, Sir, of the vile race of Israel, commonly called by the faithful, *los Christianos nuevos* ;* wretches, who fearful of the just punishment of their hereditary crimes, assumed the garb of the faithful, to save their vile lives, and their base gold ; and even in the observance of external rites, profaned the sacred altar of the blessed virgin, by their hateful genuflexions. Yet when they returned to

* New Christians.

their pestilential abodes, they sought by every possible crime, to atone for this dereliction of their pagan worship, by offering up a holocaust to their offended deity. You have no doubt also heard of that infamous jewess, who had purloined a particle of the host, and sold it to a sorceress to perform her diabolical incantations. She had locked up the sacred wafer in a drawer, but when, to close the bargain of sin with the evil one, she proceeded to open the drawer, with the infernal intention of selling the transubstantiated bread, it was full of clotted blood, and she found the pledge of salvation surrounded with a radiant mass of dazzling crystal! The perfumes of Arabia could not equal the delicious odour shed round this miraculous preservation; and no earthly music could equal the enchanting strains that were poured forth by an angelic choir around her once detested abode.

“The sorceress was instantly consumed by spontaneous combustion, and flames of burning brimstone alone marked the spot, where once she had stood, while dismal howls proclaimed

that her soul was being carried to infernal, and everlasting torments. The Jewess was destined to a happier lot: struck with the enormity of her offence, she fell upon her knees, prayed fervently for forgiveness, and died a true christian, in inexpressible bodily pain, but delicious mental enjoyment.

“ This painting, Sir, which although you are a Frenchman, I plainly see impresses you with a proper sense of awe and devotion—this painting records another act of these diabolical Hebrews—these *maranos*. Many of them had been properly burnt in the glorious *quemadero*, of our noble city, but still their perverseness could not be checked. One of our most active and diligent inquisitors died suddenly; the archbishop and the doctors declared that he had fallen a sacrifice to some *malefices* of these heathens, and a strict inquiry was set on foot. Many were the men and the women, and the children condemned to the faggot; torture alone could discover the nature of this foul deed, and every torment that christian ingenuity could devise for the protection of our

holy altars was resorted to, until at last one of these caitiffs confessed that his companions had carried off a young boy, from the solitary village of Guardia, (peace be with his blessed soul!" added the narrator crossing and recrossing himself), "and having dragged him into a neighbouring wood, actually crucified the faithful child, and whilst still alive, and pouring forth songs of praise to the blessed saints, they tore out his heart—baked it—and pulverised it with detestable and damnable ceremonies. It was with this very powder, Sir, consecrated to Satan himself, that the death of our holy inquisitor had been produced, an infernal preparation which, like the far-famed aqua tophana of Naples, left no traces of its dire effects. It is needless to add that hecatombs of infidels were sacrificed to appease the manes of the blessed victim of paganism; and it is this horrible scene, Señor, that you now behold. This child, justly called ever since, *el santo ninho de la Guardia*, is now a seraph in bliss, and let us hope that the day is not far distant, when all the *judeos* of the land

will be exterminated. The invasion of our country by your despoiling armies, is a just judgment inflicted upon us for not having already annihilated their detested race ; but I trust that we shall soon be ridden both of you and of them."

This complimentary conclusion drew forth a smile on my part, which the enthusiastic cicerone observed, and with a look of indignation, he exclaimed :

" Do you doubt the fact of all that I have related ?"

I replied that that was impossible since it was painted ; and he cast a doubtful glance upon me, and muttering some prayer between his teeth, took his departure. The mysterious stranger, whom I justly considered one of those wild and infuriated bigots, who roused by the recent sad occurrences in their country, imprudently gave vent to the warmth of their devotion, and revengeful feelings, had mentioned the *quemadero*, and I resolved the following morning to sketch the spot where once this infernal machine had been erected.

CHAPTER IV.

THE HOLY OFFICE.

THE following morning I rose early, but felt a singular and uncommon despondency ; nay a sentiment unknown to me, and which might have been considered as partaking of the character of fear. But I shook off the unpleasant sensation, and taking up my drawing materials, proceeded to that delicious valley near the city, called *la vega de Toledo*. This lovely vale irrigated by the meandering Tagus, is beautifully variegated with orchards, and gardens, and vineyards ; while the ruins of an ancient Roman amphitheatre, added to the pictu-

resque character of the landscape. It was near these proud remains of Roman power and glory, that the priests of modern Rome had erected the most diabolical invention that barbarity could devise. The infernal Torquemada, complaining of the expenses which the burning of heretics occasioned, was resolved to economise the sacred revenues of the Church, by introducing in his *autos da fé*, an ingenious imitation of the gigantic osier figures, in which the Druids of Gaul were wont to consume their victims. For this purpose he constructed an enormous hollow statue of stone and mortar, placed over an immense furnace, and the enemies of the holy Roman Catholic and Apostolical Church, were thrust down into the figure, and gradually baked with a marvellous saving of fuel, that might have vied with the economic stoves of Rumford.

I hastily sketched the remains of this monument with those of the adjoining convent, where the sufferers were duly admonished and prepared. The remembrance of

all the horrors of the Inquisition now rushed upon my mind, rendered still more vivid by the association that the scenery around me produced ; involuntarily my hand could no longer trace the detested records of these atrocities. My gloomy thoughts gradually clouded my mind, like the gathering of a mist. I put up my book and retraced my steps towards the city.

I had not proceeded far when I was joined by the very individual, I had met in the cathedral.

“ I am glad to see, Señor,” he said with a bitter and sarcastic smile, “ that you are taking back to France memorials of my country’s faith.”

“ Yes, Señor, I have just been sketching the *quemadero*.”

“ Its ruins, you mean, Sir. Alas poor Spain thy glories are gone by, thy altars are overthrown by the Philistines, thy holy asylums profaned by the Moabites ; but mark me, Frenchman, your days and those of your

ambitious monarch are numbered : the Bourbons shall reign again, restore our shrines, avenge our wrongs and rebuild our long lost *quemadero*."

It was now evident to me, that the intruder was some maniac ; and looking at the poor man with compassion, I continued my path whistling some French ditty. In a moment, the stranger was gone ; mechanically I hastened my steps, and the loneliness of the spot produced a thrill of apprehension, which actually put me to the blush. I had a pair of pistols in my pocket, our troops occupied the city, the people dreaded us ; what had I to fear !

The road became wider as I approached Toledo, and I was just turning the corner of a garden wall, when four men rushed upon me, and ere I could grasp a weapon of defence, I was covered with a cloak, thrown to the ground and pinioned.

Resistance was useless, remonstrances disgraceful ; moreover, I was so completely muffled up in the mantle cast over me, that my cries

would have been inaudible. I was thus dragged on in deadly silence, for about a quarter of an hour, and then felt myself placed behind one of these ruffians upon a mule, if I could judge by the ambling gait of our steed. Shortly after I heard the opening of a massive gate, was led down numerous steps, while the deadly and damp chill around me, convinced me that I was in some subterraneous buildings; finally, the cloak was torn off my head by one of my conductors, who, after having deprived me of my pistols, immediately withdrew, leaving me to my unsettled thoughts in a dungeon lighted up by a solitary glimmering lamp.

It was obvious that I was a prisoner of the hated Inquisition; a circumstance not a little singular, since even amongst Spaniards, at that period it was but rarely that its power was resorted to, and now a French officer, surrounded by his numerous countrymen, was deprived of liberty, an audacity that seemed incomprehensible. It appeared evident that I was a victim of

Don Pablos's bitter revenge, and I resolved to appeal to his Castilian honor, and those high chivalric feelings that ever distinguished the proud hidalgos of Spain.

With this determination, I clung to hope, and slaked my parched lips with a draught of water contained in an earthen jug, placed on a stool, with a loaf of bread. I now cast myself on a couch of straw, and reflecting how many of my unfortunate countrymen had met with perhaps a more desperate fate than that which in all probability awaited me, I fell fast asleep.

I was soon awakened from my slumber, by the entrance of a monk in the garb of St. Dominic; this appearance at once confirmed all my apprehensions. An Inquisitor stood before me.

I rose with firmness, and addressed him in a commanding tone of voice, to which, in his present capacity, he had not been used.

"It is evident, *Señor padre*, that by some foul act of treachery, I am in the hands of the

detested Inquisition. But be pleased to recollect, Sir, that I am a Frenchman, a French officer. My life may be forfeited, my limbs may be tortured by your infernal agents, but thousands of your countrymen shall rue my death in agonies as bitter as those you may inflict ; a death that shall call forth the deadliest vengeance."

"*Francez,*" he replied calmly, " this language is lofty. No act of cruelty to which your comrades might resort to avenge your sufferings, could exceed in refinement those that your sanguinary hordes daily perpetrate ; but the very nature of your death (if such are your offences, that you may be doomed to such a punishment) can never be ascertained. No one could ever suspect the Holy Office, whom your perfidious invasion has deprived of its wholesome influence in checking heresy—heresy that led to all the disasters that have visited your own ill-fated country. All external show of our power has long ceased to be manifest ; still in these subterranean abodes, which even

your all penetrating eyes could not find out, do we reign paramount, until better days shall enable us to raise in its pristine splendor, the holy banner of St. Dominic; but I trust, Sir, that we shall convince you of the justice of our institution and our tribunal. We have seen that you belong to the few chosen and elect amidst your impious legions; we shall therefore endeavour to prove to you that the mother church is still anxious to receive you, a stray sheep, within the pale of her bosom, and although you may be doomed to much temporary and bodily suffering, it will prove the ultimate welfare of your immortal soul."

"Monk," I replied, "you may address in this insulting mockery, your own blind disciples; but your hellish attributions cannot, dare not apply to me, so at your peril, detain me in your hateful dungeons."

The Dominican smiled with a bitter sarcastic look, merely adding, "*Veremos*, pray, Sir, were you not in the battle of Rio Seco?"

"I was, Sir."

“Do you recollect a young Spanish officer, on the point of being assassinated by your troopers?”

“I remember well a young man being pursued by some of my incensed dragoons; but he was wounded, I protected him, and received a pistol shot in rescuing him.”

“What became of the youth?”

“I took him to my quarters, and he died a few days after in my arms.”

“’Tis well. Do you recollect having been seen after the sack of Cordova riding with a nun behind you in front of your troops, Sir?”

“Perfectly; she belonged to a Convent of Jaen; I found her on the road side, exhausted with fatigue, her feet bleeding from the laceration of the rocks she had climbed in her flight. She sought for mercy; I raised her, placed her on my horse, and notwithstanding the mirth of my comrades, restored her to her disconsolate family at Seville.”

“When thus entrusted by Providence with this sacred charge, did no iniquitous ideas enter your mind?”

"If I understand you rightly, certainly not, Señor; I had other concerns to think of; besides she was neither young nor handsome. I have thus far answered your interrogations from courtesy; once more I deny your authority over me, and dare your tyrannic power."

"This point, Sir, shall be decided to-morrow."

He was withdrawing, when I stopped him for further explanation.

"Sir," I observed with calmness and composure, "all that you have hitherto said, only convinces me, that I am doomed to be the victim of the cowardly intrigues of Don Pablo de Placentia. I once refused to meet him, when he demanded satisfaction for wrongs to me unknown; since that period I have been made acquainted with circumstances that in some measure might have accounted for this hostile feeling. Howbeit, tell him that if one single drop of true Castilian blood flows in his veins—if he be still susceptible of any noble sentiment, and has not become a degenerate assassin, I am ready to meet him, when and wherever he thinks proper."

"The blood of Don Pablo de Placentia," replied the priest, "is too precious to be thus wasted in an ignoble conflict. He is one of Spain's brave defenders, and I trust that his sword—his sword forged in this very city, and bearing the generous inscription: *non me succas sin razon, non me embenhas sin honor*,* has other blood to shed in the field of battle, than that of a prisoner who belongs to the secular arm of the public executioner."

So saying he fiercely closed the massive door of my prison, and left me absorbed in conflicting thoughts which alone would have prevented me from closing my harassed lids, had not the constant sound of distant bells added to the gloomy train of all my reflections.

The Roman Catholics were wise when they decreed that church bells should receive the rites of baptism. Are not their loud and solemn voices intermediate organs of supplication between earth and heaven, far more elo-

* Draw me not without reason, nor sheathe me without honor—the occasional inscription on Toledo blades.

quent than human supplications? The spiritual admonitions we received in childhood, and in youth, are soon forgotten in the Lethe of worldly cares—the denunciations of tyrants are unheeded, when we have eluded their power;—all the fond pleasures of our early life, merge in the oblivious turmoils and the solitudes of after days—but the sound of the well known bell is never forgotten!—it awakens in fond memory the most distant, the most dormant recollections!—the bell that once called us to the green church-yard, to behold all that we loved in infancy committed to the earth!—that once rang the merry peal of marriage, and which soon reminded us of the frailty of worldly ties, and worldly charms, when the follies of youth are discovered too late by dearly bought experience, and Hymen's bells of joy sound like the dirge of bliss!—And who can hear unmoved the loud peals of triumph, that tingle "sweet music" in the conqueror's ears, when proudly moving in gorgeous array midst shouting and exulting crowds!—when perhaps ere long the same brazen tongues will proclaim with a still louder

din, the hero's degradation!—Happy ! thrice happy, methought, is the country, where the peaceful citizen, ungoaded by ambition, can calmly spend his days in his forefather's home ! where the same bronze that rung in his birth, shall also summon him to another life. Oh ! how much I longed to hear the chimes of my own Toulouse, now doomed perhaps as I was, to listen to the hoarse signal of St. Dominic's towers, as it called me to the rack or to the block !

The matin's chaunts had scarcely ceased to be re-echoed in the cloisters over my dungeon, when my prison door was again opened.

A monk masked with one of those fearful cowls, that disguising the features of the Inquisitors, only allow two oblique openings to feast their eyes upon their victim's agonies, entered, silently pointing to the passage.

Further remonstrance was vain ; I summoned up all my fortitude and the buoyancy of youth, prepared to meet my doom, firm and undaunted, in whatever form their refined cru-

elty might inflict it. In this hateful war, we not only had to contend against the perils of the field, but to be ever ready to meet the assassin's blow, when in a dark and safe retreat, he could enjoy retaliation's sweets, and have full leisure to glut his eyes on a lingering and agonizing death.

But I was a Frenchman, and a soldier, the star of honor still beamed proudly on my breast. Exclaiming

"A vaincre sans péril, on triomphe sans gloire,"

I followed my muffled conductor with a light and determined step.

The hated tribunal of St. Dominic no longer held its sittings in their ancient and gloomy halls. Subterraneous darkness now shed a veil on their occasional proceedings. I was ushered into a dungeon hung with black drapery, and only illumined by a massive brass lamp, suspended from its damp roof. At a table also covered with black, were seated three

monks and a secretary. In a corner of the cell was an altar with its crucifix and candles. The inquisitors were veiled, no doubt to avoid future detection in the event of their odious proceedings being discovered.

"Your name, Frenchman," was the first question put by him, who seemed to preside over these iniquitous judges between Heaven and man.

"Sir," I replied, "I shall condescend to answer you to save time, although in thus degrading myself, I by no means admit your authority over me. My name is Jean de Créci; and I demand, in the name of his Majesty the Emperor and King, and of Joseph the Ist, your sovereign, by virtue of what power, am I brought before you?"

"By virtue of that power invested in our hands, by the King of Kings, ay, even of our beloved monarch Ferdinand the VIIth; a power that places in our hands the glaive of St. Peter to punish, and the keys of the immortal world, to receive those stray sheep who may wander

from the flock of the godly and must be brought back to the pen of Mother Church, or must be driven in, if they rashly refuse to attend to the shepherd's voice."

"Or whose throats must be cut that your victims may be served up at your unholy board, to glut your thirst for blood," I replied with a bitter look of indignation.

"We advise you, Frenchman, not to aggravate your situation by insulting language," replied the monk in a voice subdued with concentrated rage.

"I dare you, Sir; your detested lives shall pay a centifold forfeit for mine, if I am missed by my brave soldiers. Toledo—ay, Toledo the Holy, shall be levelled with the dust, and the splendor of your cathedral, shall be dimmed with the blood of your impious race. My comrades will well know, that I fell not in the field, or in an honourable conflict, but was assassinated basely and cowardly. My murderers shall rue the deed."

The monks seemed staggered by my firmness, and consulted with each other for a few

moments, when one of them addressed me with an assumed air of mildness :

“ You have received, I presume, a liberal education ?”

“ I have, Sir.”

“ Then no doubt you have read the life of St. Hieronimus, the works of Eusebius, of Agrippa, the magician, Erastus and Sigismundus Schereczius, in his ninth chapter *de Hirco Nocturno*.”

“ I never heard the names of any of these writers, nor do I comprehend one syllable of your scholastic jargon.”

“ Then, Sir, do you not know, and believe that the devil has given to certain heretics and unbelievers, his own children, the power of working, by certain abominable *malefices*, upon the heart of their victims, so as to make them love those whom they should abhor and detest, by means of damnable philters, made of chemical preparations of human blood, and dead men’s bones, more especially of malefactors, who have died without the benefit of the clergy ; do you not know that the dust of a

dove's heart, a swallow's tongue, and the brains of an ass, have been thus employed by the children of Belzebub to produce unlawful love ?”

“ I have heard of such absurd stories, but never fancied that they could have seriously been entertained by any reasonable being.”

“ What Frenchman,” exclaimed another Dominican, “ was not Erastus a reasonable being ; yet he maintains in his book, *de Lamiis*, that ‘ *Sagæ omnes sibi arrogant notitiam, et facultatem in amorem alliciendi quos velint, odia inter conjuges serendi, tempestates excitandi, morbos infligendi, et cætera, et cætera, et et cæterarum ;* and pray, you infidel, do you not know that Sycinius Æmilianus summoned Apuleius before the tribunal of Cneius Maximus, for having caused his victim Pudentilla, to entertain unhallowed sentiments. *Quod Pudentillam viduam ditem et provectionis ætatis fæminam cantaminibus in amorem sui pellexissit.* Oh the mind sickens in beholding such stiff necked unbelievers, *ave Maria purissima !* no wonder that your country should be desolated by all

the scourges of Egypt, when education is thus neglected and impiety fostered. I suppose, Sir, you have read Voltaire and Rousseau ; better for you, Sir, that you had never been born, rather than to have imbibed maxims that will lead you to everlasting flames, when all these detestable books will rise about you in the agonies of despair, and serve to kindle an unquenchable fire around your miserable soul."

I could not help shrugging up my shoulders with a look of ineffable contempt, when I heard this rhapsody ; my case was evident, I had been denounced as having excited Donna Maria's affections, by some of those diabolical means, which these bigots actually credited. I therefore replied :

" I now, Sir, understand the nature of your accusation. On the word and honor of a soldier, those means of inspiring a fond passion, to which you allude are unknown to me, nor have I ever been able to discover in what manner I have had the good, or rather the ill fortune, to kindle in the bosom of a virtuous and amiable young lady, a sentiment which would

have been my pride, had not other ties prevented, I shall not say a reciprocal fondness, but a more durable union, under any other circumstances."

"He has confessed his guilt," exclaimed the learned monk, who had endeavoured to display his erudition. "He has confessed."

"Then, Frenchman, you love the lady," added the first interrogator.

"I do, Sir."

"There, there," said the president, "there, he admits it, he loved her, and not finding his insulting passion returned, he had recourse to those unholy means, described by the Fathers, and which he now pretends to disbelieve. The case is clear. He is as guilty as Rodriguez Ignatio and Juliana Lopez.* Now, Sir, ere you oblige us to have recourse to unpleasant means, avow at once your guilt, tell us by what *malefices* and incantations and sorcery, you have performed this horrible deed, and

* These unfortunate beings were burnt alive in 1784, for having prepared, and given love philters.

what are the antidotes you have discovered in Satan's laboratory, while seeking for these diabolical ingredients."

"Once more," I replied, "I deny the charge."

"'Tis well," vociferated the principal inquisitor, "'tis well he is a *comunero*,* and we shall see what the torture can effect to open those lips on which Satan has placed his seal."

The odious triumvirate with their secretary withdrew, and I was reconducted to my prison. It was evident that I was destined to endure the agonies of their refined method of making the innocent plead guilty, to avoid unbearable sufferings, or the guilty seek for mercy by exaggerating their offence. I have ever been ruffled by trifling occurrences of an unpleasant nature, which sometimes may ripple the smooth tide of a tranquil life; but in all great emergencies, I have been able to assume a perfect composure, the gift of a moral courage, much more rare, than those physical energies which

* A prisoner who refuses to confess his guilt.

prompt us to dare danger. The breeze that might discompose my apparel, would oftentimes irritate me, when the whirlwind hurling destruction around me, was unheeded. Such was my present situation. Some may call it a stoic apathy, I deem it true courage, when a real calm is experienced, for we must not take a reckless rhodomontade for that tranquil resignation with which a man endowed with truly manly virtue faces inevitable destruction.

It is a digression to my story, but I cannot avoid remarking that your countrymen exhibit more of this moral fortitude than we Frenchmen. Your courage is more natural, ours is artificial. I have observed, when in action with your troops, a dogged, inflexible bravery in your army, that never can be obtained in ours. You will excuse me, when I attribute this difference, in a great measure at least, to the peculiar characters of our national forces. The English soldier is in fact a mercenary, and as such more or less a mechanical automaton. It is true, that he is proud of his country and anxious to preserve its boasted superiority,

as far as regards personal preeminence—such as may be obtained in the boxing ring, or the race course. Still he is not a reflecting, calculating being. He displays animal courage without the aid of animal spirits. He marches to danger, because he is led on in the perilous path, and he knows that the brand of coward would render him an outcast amongst his comrades. He requires no drum, no music to cheer him on the onset. Rouse him from the soundest sleep, he will be as ready for the conflict, as when awakening refreshed from a long repose. Not so with the Frenchman. He is called to the profession of arms by our laws, and as he stands some chance of advancing in grade, he makes the art of war a profession. Many a time the soldier is better born and better bred than his officer. This makes him reflect. He dabbles more or less in politics. This leads him to approve or to condemn the conduct of his chiefs. His notions of honor and of glory, and of country, are chivalrous, and like all chivalry founded on romantic and unphilosophical principles. He is not satisfied like your countrymen, with the

conviction of his own courage, he only wants others to think him courageous, although in heart, he may be naturally pusillanimous. You cannot divest his bravery of vanity. He would achieve all that man can attain in the path of fame, if in the world's gaze; in the dark and alone, he would fly from danger, with such trepidation, as to cast from him in dismay the very arms with which he might have defended his life.

Thus does vanity under the banners of misnamed love, often prompt the man *à bonne fortunes*, to acts of criminalty. He would rather that the world should erroneously believe that he had intrigued with a beauteous and a virtuous woman, than delight in a real victory over a cruel fair. It is the same in the field of what we call honor, I have known men guilty of the most odious crimes, for the purpose of obtaining the proud distinction of the Legion of Honor; and our Emperor well knew that he could lead us on to the deadly breach with a scrap of red ribband, more easily than by the promise of an ample provision

in after life for the veteran. A singular instance of the kind occurred in my regiment, which I shall relate.

We were quartered at Angers; it became necessary to send a sergeant and two men to Nantes for cloathing: they departed. The sergeant wore the cross of the Legion, although he had been but a short time in the army. One of the privates was a young man of good education, who had been an attorney's clerk, when the conscription called him from the desk to the ranks. He was romantic and ambitious; in every quarter he was or fancied himself in love. A *voltigeur*, he would rather have served without pay, than have been stripped of his *bricquet*,* and yellow epaulettes to become a fusilier. His sole desire was the red ribband; this distinction, from various circumstances, he could never obtain.

The civil war which had desolated the province in which we were quartered was nearly

* The *bricquet* is the small sabre carried by the flank companies of the French army.

brought to a happy conclusion, still some desultory bands would harass the country, and occasionally attack stragglers of our army. The party was, therefore, armed with their carbines and pistols.

They were proceeding merrily on their route, when night overtook them in a solitary part of the *bocage*.* Here our youth, whose name was Durand, contemplated the most atrocious project to attain the object of all his desires. The sergeant was trolling a well known guard-house chaunt. Durand's comrade, a young conscript was heavily trudging along, regretting the comforts of home, and cursing Emperor and Empire. The miserable Durand loitered behind, pretending to be lame; on a sudden, having arrived at a dark winding path in the underwood, he levelled his carbine at the sergeant, and shot him dead. Then aiming his pistol at his astonished companion, he brought him down. He then reloaded his pistol, and shot himself through the fleshy part of the left arm.

He pursued his journey after this desperate

* The thick underwood of those districts.

deed, until he reached a neighbouring hamlet. It was night, all was still. Perceiving a light gleaming through the lattice of a cottage, he rapped at the door with violence, and being admitted by the terrified inmates, he requested to be immediately taken before the mayor.

The magistrate roused from his sleep, reluctantly attended his call, when he informed him, that his party had been attacked by a fierce band of *Chouans*, and that after a long conflict, they had beaten off their opponents with great loss, and that they had fled carrying off their dead and their wounded, leaving him the only survivor.

After this declaration, he repaired to the head quarters of his regiment, where he made a similar report, corroborated by the fact of the sergeant's corpse, having been found on the very spot he had described. He was somewhat uneasy at the body of his comrade not having been brought in, but he had shot him through the head, and he might have been concealed by the thick brushwood where he had fallen.

This heroic action was inserted in all the public papers, with a detailed account of the rencontre, and in a few days, by order of the minister of war, the Star of the Legion of Honor was displayed on Durand's breast, while the gold *chevrons*, of the murdered sergeant, were proudly worn on his arm. No bitter remorse seemed to disturb his repose, dreams of an officer's epaulettes alone burst on his slumbers, and he ardently prayed to be draughted in a regiment going to Spain, whilst ours was under orders for Parisian duty.

His application was granted, and one morning he was summoned to attend at the adjutant's, in the expectation of receiving a route to join his new corps. He bade farewell to his less fortunate comrades, and after treating them to a *chopine* of wine, he merrily attended the regimental office. But judge of his surprise when he beheld before him, seated at a little table, near to his colonel and his chef d'escadron, one of his miserable victims.

His face pale and livid, was rendered still

more ghastly by the bandages that were wrapped around his head; his whole figure was emaciated. Durand stood amazed before the apparition, who raising his withered arm, and pointing his shrivelled finger at him, exclaimed in a faltering voice, "*voilà notre assassin.*"

Durand for a moment stood aghast, and he would have fallen to the ground, had he not been supported by the orderlies in the room. His eyes, dreading the fatal evidence of his guilt, were now riveted on the earth, his hands clenched in convulsive contraction. His teeth and lips were firmly locked, while a spasmodic movement shook every fibre of his agitated frame, as the feeble conscript was relating the particulars of the atrocious deed.

He had been severely wounded, and found the following morning, by some peasants going to market, who carried him to a neighbouring hospital. Here he remained senseless for a considerable time, until able to relate to his medical attendants his melancholy adventure, when he was sent to head quarters.

The colonel of the regiment having heard

this evidence, which he was somewhat unwilling to believe, as he scarcely could imagine Durand capable of such an unaccountable crime, asked him what he had to allege in his behalf. But here his moral courage failed ; his perturbation betrayed him, and his silence evidently pleaded guilt, when a simple perseverance in his former invented tale might have fully borne him out against the improbable accusation of a young peasant, who in a moment of danger on a sudden attack, might have been too much agitated to ascertain whence the unexpected fire had proceeded. One circumstance alone could have substantiated the charge, both the sergeant and the conscript had received their wounds in the back, which certainly would not have been probable, had they been shot by an enemy in action.

Durand was forthwith brought before a court martial, and sentenced to death. The following morning the garrison was drawn out, and the firing party formed. Preceded by the drums of the troops beating a funeral march, the prisoner appeared. His steps were firm,

he still wore the fatal cross that had prompted him to the perpetration of such an unheard of crime ; but when the adjutant tore it from his bosom, the sense of degradation overcame him, and he sunk in the arms of the officer of his escort.

As the sentence was read aloud, he plucked up resolution, and when ordered to kneel down in front of the detachment, he suddenly drew from his bosom, a small pistol, which he had secreted, and discharged it in the region of the heart. He fell, but not dead ; his hand still grasped the weapon of his destruction, and exclaiming with a voice singularly firm for a dying man,

“ Je meurs comme un soldat français, les armes à la main ! ” he expired.

This singular case presents a strange anomaly of noble and of detestable passions. Durand was brave, yet he dreaded to meet the eyes of the world, when he could not display a badge of his courage. It subsequently appeared that love had some share in this diabolical act, as his mistress, who held no higher

rank than that of a *ravaudeuse*,* used frequently to taunt him for not having obtained *la croix des braves*.

It has often been remarked by other armies, that the noise that prevails in our ranks is a proof of a want of discipline; this is not the case; our men must talk, or they would not fight. Our old *moustaches*, as we call our veteran warriors, are all *bragadocios*, who cheer the young *blanc-becs*, or beardless striplings, with the recital of their wonderful achievements. If one of these hoary troopers has killed his hundred, he is soon out-done by the account of the destruction of a thousand. This boasting is carried to such a pitch, that it has led to blasphemous gasconading, and our grenadiers maintain with the old Bretons

“Qu'ils marchent vingt-cinq pas devant le bon Dieu !”

Thus does animated conversation, encouraged by the sound of martial music, inspire our soldiers with that ardor that renders their

* A mender of stockings, linen, &c.

onset overwhelming ; but, like all artificial stimulants, the excitement ceases when the exciting cause no longer acts. Let the soldier sleep, and his courage is also lulled to rest. I have often been surprised that our enemies had so seldom recourse to night attacks, when our energies are slumbering. Your courage is animal, ours is chivalrous. In defeat and unexpected reverses we are soon demoralized. If you English have your regular supplies of food, you know not when you are beaten. This reminds me of an expression of our Emperor,—“you stand firm when you ought to fly.”

Our party was much gratified with the digression of the Frenchman ; although he might not altogether have been correct in his delineation of the British soldier, yet his description of his countrymen bore a character of frankness that entitled him to belief, although it might have been somewhat exaggerated, since the narrator, as we subsequently found, had been sadly disappointed and ill-used in his army.

The conversation having thus turned upon

courage in battle, one of the party related a singular case of transient bravery.

At the storming of Morne Fortunée, in the West Indies, I knew an Irish officer of the name of W——, who had lately joined his corps. He led the forlorn hope, and displayed a cool determination that surprised the oldest soldiers. Bearing the King's colours in one hand, and waving his sword with the other, he was the first to ascend the ladder, and plant our victorious standard in the breach. W—— was thanked in public orders by his commanding officer, who congratulated him on his bravery, and informed him that he was recommended for immediate promotion. What was his surprise when the young soldier answered that all he wished to obtain was leave to return home, and throw up his commission in favour of a younger brother, who ardently wished to embrace the profession of arms.

The colonel, surprised at so singular a request, was naturally anxious to know to what he could attribute so strange a resolution in a

young man with so bright a career before him.

"Is it a wish," he said, "to see your family?"

"No, Sir," was the cold reply of W——

"You, perhaps, are in love, and fear the danger of absence?"

"No, Sir; if absence could produce any alteration in the affection of one that we might love, it would be proof that her attachment was of a very frail nature."

"What then can be your motives? You have just distinguished yourself before the enemy; you are now a lieutenant, and, in all likelihood, another battle, and you may obtain a company."

"This is exactly the reason why I wish to quit the service."

"What the prospect of rapid promotion!" The colonel thought him mad.

"No, Sir; but the fear of degradation."

"You speak in riddles."

"Then, Sir, I must be explicit; it is this very expectation of other conflicts, in which you are

kind enough to think I may again distinguish myself, that convinces me that the career of arms is not my destiny. Must I confess the painful truth? the sight of the first man that fell near me in the ranks struck me with that sense of danger, that innate feeling of self-preservation, that, to my shame I own it, I was on the point of disgracing myself for ever when the next man was killed, bespattering me with his brains; for a moment I was nearly struck blind, yet I moved on mechanically with our party. I was roused from this apathetic state by the loud cheers of my companions; it seemed to me a dream. I felt inspired with an unknown energy; I knew not where I was when I found myself on the breach, my colours planted in the ruin, surrounded with the dead and the dying! What may appear to you, Sir, still more strange, I scarcely knew myself. I gazed on my uniform, wondered at my transformation from the peaceable garb I wore in my father's office (he was an attorney,) to the trappings of a soldier. In short, all appeared to me a vision. The kind congratulations of my comrades

shortly restored me to my senses, which soon convinced me that the closet was more natural to me than the field."

This candid confession, of what might be called natural feeling, did not deter his commanding officer from urging him to persevere in the profession :—his resolution was unalterable. He returned to Ireland, and his brother succeeded him in the regiment.

"This incident is by no means singular," observed the narrator of the French Deserter's story; "and you will in some measure find it explained by his own reflections on the subject when in his dungeon." He then proceeded in the relation.

CHAPTER V.

A TRIAL.

I NOW felt myself prepared for the worst that could befall me, and fully experienced that distinction which our writer Duclos has made between courage of the heart and courage of the mind. The first sentiment is frequently a sudden impulse, the spur of the moment, often involuntary and instinctive—the defence of our life, or the destruction of a destroyer. The second feeling is the result of reflection ; it is a proud elevation of the mind, that bids us in a stern language to maintain the dignity of manhood :—our reputation is attacked, our fortune ruined ; this high bearing urges us to defend the one unto death, and not to sink in useless despondency in the other case, but boldly to

buffet the adverse tide of worldly affairs.—This may be called a stern resolve, and was what I felt. I could have walked to execution with the same firmness that the victims of our revolution displayed when ascending the inevitable scaffold, gazing with serenity on the gleaming axe suspended over their heads.

The door of my dungeon was opened, and I sprung up to follow my executioner as readily as when the trumpet's clang had called me to the field. It was only the keeper. To my surprise, he brought me a bottle of wine, a roasted fowl, and closed the door.

So, thought I, the miscreant wishes to give me sufficient strength to support his tortures; they think me a coward!

It is scarcely credible, but this degrading idea made me, hungry as I was, delay the welcome meal; but nature got the better of chivalry, and I made a hearty repast, and should most unquestionably have finished the bottle of *val de penas*, had it not been from the apprehension that the firmness I might display in my approaching sufferings, might be attributed

to inebriety. Alas ! what artificial creatures we are !

Again the door opened ; a monk beckoned me to follow him, and I soon found myself in a subterranean chapel—no doubt to hear mass before execution. The friar who conducted me was silent, but when he afterwards addressed me in a mild manner, methought I recognized his voice as one I had often heard before.

“Don Juan,” he said, when we were both seated, “we are anxious to prove to you that our tribunal is not so sanguinary and inflexible as you infidels suppose. Your guilt has been proved — proved beyond a doubt. Donna Maria d’Oropesa, the brightest gem of Castile, has been the victim of your diabolical machinations !”

Indignant at the absurdity of the accusation, I was about to reply, when the Dominican stopped me, observing :

“You cannot disprove the charge.”

“Nor can you prove it,” I replied.

“As clearly as holy writ,” he added ; “but we wish to hold forth a hand of mercy. You

are condemned to undergo the means of obtaining the avowal of your guilt, and then to be handed to the secular arm for the benefit of your miserable soul."

"Curse your hypocritical jargon!" I exclaimed; "I shall hear no more. Lead me to the rack, and then lash my mangled body to the stake; I am prepared."

"Come, come, be not so hasty, young man; you ought to wish to live for Donna Maria's sake."

"How! explain?"

"Your damnable drugs have operated so fearfully on her poor mind, that we feel convinced she could not survive the *auto da fe* to which we might bring you. Recollect, Sir, she is the daughter of a noble Castilian, a Hidalgo of the royal house. You have shamefully seduced a noble damsel."

"By heavens, monk, you basely lie!" I exclaimed.

"Be not so precipitate," replied the monk; "one only means is left you to avoid your fate."

“ Once more, lead me to it.”

“ Yet you may still escape the doom awarded you, and live to be happier than you deserve.”

“ Then once more explain ?”

“ By marrying your victim.”

Need I say that I was thunderstruck by this astounding proposal.

“ Marry Donna Maria d’Oropesa !” I exclaimed with amazement.

“ There—there,” replied the monk, “ you admit that she was your victim. Criminals should be more guarded, Frenchman ; but, I repeat it, we are merciful ; and this union may restore you to liberty.”

“ Were the faggots lighted to consume me, and I was tied to your infernal stake, I cannot—will not prove false to my former vows.”

“ Then prepare yourself for the torture ; but during the short space of time that our pity allows you, put up fervent prayers to the Holy Virgin and the blessed saints to soften your obdurate heart.”

So saying, the friar left me, and I was reconducted to my dungeon.

Forty-eight hours was I left in solitude, a prey to hunger and the most conflicting reflections. What can I say for myself? I was young—a bright career was before me, since I had been recommended for promotion, Donna Maria still held a sovereign sway over every thought. The strange nature of the adventure—the certainty of death—and perhaps the sweetness of the means that might preserve my life, were thoughts that shook my fortitude. Moreover, was I not virtually forced to break my pledged faith with Coralie? If she truly loved me, and could have beheld me in my cruel situation, surely, methought, she would urge me to a breach of my promise? My door once more opened; the same monk appeared, and, with a faltering voice, I accepted the proposals of my judge.

In an instant the Dominican cast off his cowl, and embraced me with delight, when I recognized my merry companion Father Bento, the Countess's chaplain.

"My dear friend," he exclaimed, "I have for your sake undertaken to save you; nay, for

the sake of the Countess, and of that angelic creature, Donna Maria. Had the inquisition known my motive, the alternative between life and death perhaps had not been granted. Come, then, the beautiful Maria—whose agonies during your captivity were, I am convinced, much more pungent than your own—Maria la Maravilla awaits you in an adjoining chapel. Come and let me unite you in the bonds of indissoluble bliss.”

So saying, he threw one of his arms round my waist, and conducted me to the same subterranean chapel in which I had been examined.

The altar was lighted up, and chaplets of flowers decorated the gloomy scene. A monk was present, and, holding forth a crucifix, requested me to swear, in the most solemn manner, never to reveal what had passed so long at least as our armies were in Spain. To extricate myself from the toils in which I had fallen, I acquiesced without hesitation. The priest departed, and in a moment after, Father Bento introduced the lovely Maria.

She was, if possible, more beautiful than ever ; clad in a blue Milanese riding dress, consisting of a close fitting body, with silver globe buttons, like a hussar's dolman, with broad loose trowsers drawn tight over the ankle, and studded with buttons along the side seams. She wore a broad brimmed beaver, with black falling plumes ; and altogether her appearance was as picturesque as our position was romantic.

She threw herself in my arms, and while a flood of tears were flowing from her beauteous eyes, she exclaimed, with a bewitching sweetness,

“ Oh ! Juanito, you do not hate me !”

Those whose ears have never been fortunate enough to hear the fond sound of a Spanish diminutive, cannot form an idea of the delicious emphasis of these expressions, when pronounced by a lovely girl. I was sufficiently versed in the syntax of love to reply in her own fond language ; and pressing her in rapture to my heart, I replied :

“ *Mariquita mia*, I love thee dearer than life !”

*"Antonces que vengan!"** she exclaimed, with Amazonian energy.

The marriage ceremony was performed. I cannot say that Coralie was forgotten, but certainly she was not present in my memory at the moment.

* Now, let then come.

CHAPTER VI.

THE STRATAGEM.

I ONCE more beheld the bright and serene sky of Spain. I was bewildered, and knew not what means to adopt, when Mariquita informed me that my regiment had marched to Saragossa, and that we should forthwith follow it. A carriage and four mules had been held in readiness, and we were soon in full speed, the mules, without reins or bits, galloping away, accelerated or checked by the voice of the driver calling each of them in turn by their well-known names, in modulations of encouragement or rebuke.

At La Guardia we found a French post; and here we halted at the venta. It may easily be

imagined that I was not long without endeavouring to gratify my curiosity respecting the plan that had been resorted to to bring about this strange marriage, when my lovely wife after much hesitation, many tears, and perhaps as many kisses, now and then hiding and nestling her head in my bosom, then looking at me with supplicating eyes, seated herself on my knee, and casting one arm round my neck, while with the other hand she fondly clasped mine, she began her narrative :

“ Ere I had seen you, I had heard much of you. The youth, whose life you saved at the risk of your own at Ocaña, was a brother of mine ; ere he died under your kind care, he had written to me, and implored me, that if ever the chances of war brought you to Toledo, to repay, if possible, by any attentions that might lay in my power, the debt of obligation he had incurred. By another fatality, the nun you also rescued from death and ignominy was a beloved aunt, who in my infancy had been to me a second mother. Judge then of my surprise, when I discovered that you were the offi-

cer whom a billeting angel had brought to our house.

“In vain I supplicated my proud father to attend to my brother’s dying request; he was inflexible. The hatred he bore to your country was so inveterate, that I really believe, much as he affected to love me, he would sooner have beheld me smitten to death before him, than placed in a situation where there might have existed a probability of my viewing a Frenchman without abhorrence. This unjust sentiment was fully partaken by his favourite Don Pablo de Placentia, a proud and cruel enthusiast, to whom I was to have been united, but whom I ever disliked.

“My entreaties in your behalf excited in the mind of this haughty nobleman, a frantic jealousy, which of course increased the growing interest I felt in all that concerned you; and I must confess that when my maid, who had conversed with your servant, informed me that your love had been elsewhere plighted, this interest did also increase with my detestation of Don Pablo.

“ Oh, many—many a time could I have sought you and avowed all that I felt; but pride checked my most ardent wishes; for alas! *Juanito*, we poor women are a sad instance of strength and weakness, of resolution and helplessness. I felt that I loved, where attachment was in every respect condemnable—for it could not be friendship—since I knew you not; but that sympathetic and unaccountable feeling that assumes a mastery over our will when most we seek to repress it. Besides it was evident that our destiny had been cast by more than mortal power—that you, the friend of my dear relations, should have been thus accidentally brought under my roof, and then when first I beheld you, through the ever half opened lattice of my window, I felt that my existence would prove a blank without you. How fervently did I pray to the Virgin, whose painting, by our Murillo, was suspended over my couch! how often gazed upon her sweet countenance to implore her aid! till methought she smiled through my tears, and seemed with divine benignity to sanction my affection.

“ Judge then, what were my agonising feelings, when my father, with a stern look informed me that he would have you removed from his house. I knew not what to do ; had I dared to remonstrate, he would have sent me to a distant convent. I therefore resolved to consult my friend the Countess d’Avila.

“ She smiled at my despair ; and so far from rebuking me for my imprudence, approved of my choice, and lost no time in repairing to the Alcalde, in order that he might give you a billet upon her house, which was accordingly forwarded to my father.

“ By her advice, I firmly told my father that I was resolved never to unite my destiny to Don Pablo ; he was furious ; but I was a Spaniard, and both his threats and entreaties were of no avail. I insisted upon entering the College of the Noble Damsels, as previously arranged by the Countess ; to this proposal he reluctantly consented, and you know the rest.”

Here Donna Maria cast her dejected looks to the ground ; her voice had faltered, she withdrew her arm from my neck, her hand from

mine, and looked like a culprit on the point of hearing a fatal sentence pronounced.

"Come, dear Mariquita," I said, with a soothing smile, "I fancy that I comprehend this silence and this agitation."

She looked up for a moment, and then again her streaming eyes were fixed to the earth.

"Come, *Querida mia*," I said, while embracing her; "it was thy love, thy wild romantic love, that threw me into the inquisition dungeon."

"No, no, no," she exclaimed, impatiently; "oh, no, no; it was not I; it was the Countess."

"The Countess!—what could have been her motive?"

"Hatred."

"What hatred to me?"

"Oh no, not to you; but to Don Pablo."

"What, endeavour to get me burnt alive, because she hated Don Pablo!"

"Not one hair of your head would they have dared to injure; but she knew, from your high principles and what you call honor, that this

stratagem was the only means of uniting us."

"Then the charge of sorcery made against me was mere mockery."

"By no means; the Countess got you denounced by one of the familiars, whom she had bribed. But never—never for one moment was your liberty or life in danger. I tell you once more it was her hatred to Don Pablo that urged her to hasten our union; and I believe it was no other feeling that induced her to sanction my attachment. Long had she herself loved Don Pablo, and often fancied that she would have borne his name; in me she therefore viewed a hated rival, and she well knew that she could not inflict a deeper or a keener blow to his love and his pride than by tearing me from him, and throwing me in the arms of a detested rival. This, Juanito, is the history of an adventure that must have appeared to you passing strange."

"Then you *did* consent to the stratagem?"

Another silence, and another nestling of her head in my bosom, was her only reply. I

could not but smile at the ingenuity of Spanish ladies; and when she sweetly implored to be forgiven, while her brightening looks sought their wonted fire in my smiles, I felt that I could scarcely blame her.

Mariquita soon informed me that she had fresh motives of apprehension, and entreated me, if possible, to take her with me to France. Don Pablo, exasperated at her conduct, had sworn a deadly war against the French, and to further his sanguinary hopes of revenge, had placed himself at the head of a guerilla formed of desperadoes of every description, and assumed the name of *El Vengador*. This information which she had received was correct, and was confirmed the following morning by a letter to her from the Countess, illustrating in the most fearful manner, the jealous workings of a disappointed woman. It ran thus :

“ Proud woman—my wishes are fulfilled. You have betrayed your country and your faith, to become the scorn and by-word of every generous Spaniard. You fancied by your

wanton artifice that you had deprived me of the affections of a man whom I had the folly to love. Coquetry will often fall in its own toils. You trifled with his feelings as you had gloried in insulting mine; and you have thus created two enemies, whose sole study shall be the misery and the destruction of both you and your worthless choice. All the torments that gold and insulted pride can procure, shall surround you by day and by night; sleep shall forsake your pillow, and the very rustling of the leaf alarm you. A host of inflexible patriots shall hover around you, and death in every form attend each footstep of thine and thy vile paramour—for husband I cannot call thy unhallowed companion. I bid thee not farewell, for I shall ever be by thy side.

“ War eternal—war to the knife.”

PALMIRA D'AVILA.”

Mariquita could not dissemble her apprehension, when she read this desperate production, which I affected to treat with contempt, although in reality, I was alarmed on her ac-

count, well knowing what atrocious projects would be formed by the infuriated enthusiasts. I was resolved to take every possible precaution, more especially as we were moving into Arragon, where the cavalry were scattered in small detachments, to procure forage and provision, and scour the country after the numerous Guerillas that infested it.

We joined the regiment, when I presented my wife to my brother officers, to whom I related so much of our adventures as I thought consistent with propriety, fearful that the prejudices of my companions might not view Maria's conduct in the same light that I had beheld it, through the medium of affection—an affection which was not only strengthened by our mutual danger, but by a letter I received from France, informing me that my fair Coralie, long before my adventure, had married the prefect of Toulouse.

My wife beamed with delight on receiving this intelligence, and, crossing herself, exclaimed :

“ Ah, Juanito, I knew that the blessed Virgin had sanctioned our love !”

CHAPTER VII.

THE GUERILLA.

As we marched by troops, Mariquita ever rode by my side ; she was an excellent horsewoman, mounting, as is usual in Spain, like a man, and not in the unsafe seat of a side saddle. She bore the fatigue of the road as well as our oldest trooper ; and, more alarmed on my account than her own, smiled at the thought of danger, and insisted on carrying a brace of pistols at her holster. Her vivacity, her mingled gentleness and determination, soon rendered her a general favourite ; there was not a dragoon in my troop who would not have cheerfully shed his blood in her defence ; and never was rear guard, advanced guard, and flanking guard more vigilant than ours.

Her courage was soon put to the test. One sultry evening we were riding along a rocky pass, bounded on each side by a high bank, crested with the broad leaves of the aloes, and covered with thicket and underwood, when one of my videttes came riding in to inform me that he was certain an ambuscade was threatening us.

Ten of my men instantly alighted, and with sloped carbines ascended both banks of the road, to reconnoitre our flanks. We moved slowly on; never did I experience such a sense of apprehension before. I gazed on my companion; she was firm, nay, a smile played on her countenance, as she tied the strings of her hat under her chin, to secure it; and then handing me one of her pistols, requested me, with the calmness of a veteran, to see if it was in good order. I had scarcely returned her the weapon with a trembling hand, when a few shots proved to me that the information of my videttes was correct.

By this time we had arrived at the brow of the hill, when a sudden fire in our front brought

down several men and horses; the confusion was increased by the unruly steeds of the dismounted dragoons, who had gone *en reconnaissance*, and who were now keeping up a fire on the flank of our assailants, who, perceiving that our ranks were broken, charged with fury, led on by a well mounted chief, with a bushy beard, and high bear-skin cap, giving him a most ferocious appearance.

Mariquita gave a loud shriek, and exclaimed: "Jesu! it is Don Pablo!" Yet her fortitude did not forsake her; with a steady hand she drew out a pistol, while with the other she checked the curvetting of her spirited horse.

My dragoons crowded around me, determined to cover me and my precious treasure in the conflict which was carried on with fury on both sides, while Pablo was cheering on his banditti, and exclaiming: "Do not kill them, take them *alive*."

We were overwhelmed by numerical superiority, which was only resisted by uncommon deeds of desperate valour on the part of my

men, who were fast dropping off, killed and wounded, and despatched with the lances of our assailants. Our fate seemed inevitable ; but the enemy's ranks were also thinning, and opened the road to us. At that moment, a ball struck the neck of Maria's horse. The brave animal sprung forward, and darted over the brow of the hill at the top of his speed. I urged on my charger after her, making a cut at the ruffian Pablo as I passed him, but which he ably parried, instantly starting in pursuit.

For some time we galloped on the *plateau* we had reached, but the wounded horse of my wife gradually became exhausted, while the Guerilla chief was rapidly gaining ground on us. His followers were now slackening their pace, he was alone ; I instantly halted, and wheeled round, while my undaunted companion followed my example. Don Pablo paused, reined in his horse, and with an execration commanded us to surrender. I rushed on, giving point ; but he it appeared wore a cuirass under his garment, and my sabre broke short near

the hilt. He rose on his stirrups with an infernal smile, and was about cutting me down, when Mariquita, with an unerring hand, fired, and brought him to the ground.

Not a moment was to be lost; the followers of the chief were closing—Mariquita's horse was fast sinking; she observed that my charger was still fresh, and with the agility of an Amazon, she sprang behind me, and throwing an arm round my neck, to maintain her seat, exclaimed: "*Querido estamos seguros!*"* in an instant we dashed on, leaving the wounded Pablo in the hands of his comrades.

We were not far from one of those posts that we were obliged to establish all over those points of Spain that our armies occupied, for the purpose of keeping up our communication. We arrived, and put up at the house of the curate of the place, convinced that however unwilling he might be to afford us any information, we might learn something from him concerning Don Pablo, or as he was called, the *Vengador*.

* Beloved, we are safe.

The old priest did not disguise his sentiments ; and when he perceived that my companion was a Spaniard, with a look of sovereign contempt he observed :

“ That patriotic lady, no doubt, is the object of *El Vengador's* pursuit. Believe me, Sir, if you value her life—I shall not say her honor, since that has long been forfeited—you will relieve the country of her presence ; for in Spain neither you nor her have long to live.”

Indignant at being thus insulted in our own cantonments, I was about to punish the temerity of the miscreant, when Mariquita, with a calm smile, begged me to forgive the foolish man's conduct. Four of my dismounted dragoons shortly came in ; all the others had either been killed in the affair, or murdered when wounded, and taken prisoners. I was conversing with several officers on this fatal occurrence, when a party of *chasseurs* arrived, bringing in fourteen prisoners of Pablo, with one of his officers. They were conducted into the room—a sullen ferocity gleaming on their swarthy features. Mariquita with a

convulsive movement, grasped a glass of wine, and drinking it off, exclaimed with a fearful energy,

“ Juan, I must withdraw ; do your duty— blood for blood—and forget that mine is Spanish.”

So saying, she quitted the apartment, drawing the broad leaf of her hat over her eyes. She had decreed the prisoners’ doom. Our soldiers led them into the yard, and the report of a volley of carbines soon announced that our butchered companions had been avenged. I hastened into Maria’s chamber ; she was on her knees before a crucifix, her arms folded, her streaming eyes fixed on the emblem of our Saviour, whom she was imploring for *my* safety.

From what we could collect from the prisoners, Don Pablo had only been slightly wounded ; it therefore became still more urgent to keep a good look out ; and the following day I continued my route with a small detachment. Nothing particular occurred, during several days’ march, except the usual assassi-

nation of every straggler. One evening, remarkably sultry and oppressive, we had resolved to halt in a shady village, and put up at a venta. The *posadera*, or landlady, came out to welcome us with a smile of politeness that we seldom witnessed; Mariquita looked anxiously at her, and entreated me to continue our march; but our horses and mules were jaded, the next day would take us to our headquarters, and, laughing at her fears, I ordered supper, and proceeded to take the usual precaution for the night; the door was barricaded, two men placed on the steeple of the village, to keep a look out, and sentinels posted at the upper windows.

Maria was miserable, and despite her endeavour to appear cheerful; it was evident that her mind was a prey to sinister forebodings. I could not prevail upon her to take any refreshment, or to lie down to rest; for one moment overcome by fatigue, she fell asleep in her chair, when suddenly starting from her doze, she exclaimed:

“We are betrayed! let us away.”

Alarmed by this singular perturbation in one so calm in the utmost danger, I began to sympathize in her apprehension, and resolved to question the woman of the house and the servants; in vain I sought them, they had disappeared. Justly alarmed, I proceeded to the hall, where I had left my faithful companions enjoying a skin of wine in merry was-sail; they were extended on the ground, fast asleep; I strove to awaken them; it was a vain attempt. Their slumber was unnatural; and my companion, crossing herself, exclaimed with bitterness:

“They are poisoned!”

Those sentinels I had posted at the windows were sufficiently awake to recognize me, but so drowsy, that it was evident they had partaken of the soporific drugs given to their comrades. Our situation was desperate; I hastened to the stables and saddled horses; we were preparing to depart, when a shot fired from the adjoining steeple, announced that the enemy was nigh.

In a few moments the tramp of horses was

heard around the house, and heavy blows of pickaxes and mattocks were breaking down the barricade of the entrance. Mariquita continued calm ; an angelic serenity brightened her countenance, and after embracing me tenderly, she drew a small stiletto from her bosom, and exclaimed :

“ Juanito, we must show them how we can die ; but thy Mariquita shall not be dishonoured.”

In a moment the room was crowded with a fierce rabble ; resistance was useless. I was pisioned, my poor companion's arms were also secured, and we were silently placed on mules, while I beheld my poor sleeping soldiers heaped on a cart like cattle driven to slaughter.

Not a sound was breathed by any of the party ; our sad *cortége* moved on through winding rocky paths, so overrun with brushwood, that they sometimes were scarcely perceptible, though the moon was brightly beaming on the melancholy scene. Two hours after day break, we had arrived at a small hamlet on the mountain, and we halted at the entrance of a her-

mitage. Here we were made to alight, and being led into this once holy retreat of some anchorite, beheld the monster Pablo lounging on a couch, one of his arms was in a sling, and he was calmly smoking his cigar.

As we entered, he saluted us with a hellish grin, rendered still more diabolical by his pale and cadaverous visage.

"*Bien venida, Senhora Donna Maria!*" he said, "welcome to my cottage! *Monsieur le Chevalier de Crécy!*" he added, turning round to me.

I would have replied; but rage and my agonized feelings checked my utterance.

"You must be hungry and thirsty," he continued. "Come, spread the board; my noble visitor will not think it beneath his dignity to grace a Guerilla repast."

In a moment, two ruffians, attired in the full dress coat of French general officers, now worn as liveries, and strangely contrasting with the other part of their peasant garb, officiated as servants. Eight or ten of his ferocious companions came in, and in a boisterous manner threw themselves around a rustic table in all

the picturesque attitudes of one of Salvator's Brigand halts. The monsters gazed on the lovely prisoner with the looks of satyrs, and soon copious libations of wine inflamed their passions and fired their infernal countenances.

"Señores," at last exclaimed the chief, "this lovely lady disdained me for a foreigner; she perhaps may find amongst you more powerful attraction; to you, therefore, I give her up; the brave deserve the fair—she is your prize."

The satanic party threw off overflowing bumpers of wine, roaring out loud *vivas* to their worthy chief; then sprang up from the table, to rush upon their victim; but Pablo now foresaw that he had cast before them a prize of contention, that might lead to fatal consequences, and stopping them, with a loud and commanding voice, exclaimed:

"Not so fast, gentlemen; her fate is to be cast by lots."

At this atrocious declaration, the distracted Mariquita threw herself on her knees, and in the name of her father and her family, prayed for immediate death.

He replied, with the look of a demon,

“The Maravilla of Castile shall not sue in vain; death she must meet—but it shall be inflicted in the manner I have decreed. As for you, my valiant Frenchman, you shall witness to-morrow’s festivals, and the pastimes that beguile a Guerilla’s leisure hours.”

So saying, he rose amidst the murmurs of his disappointed officers, who quitted the hermitage, casting upon Mariquita looks expressive of all the worst passions that can inspire the basest of men. Mariquita and I were separated, and carried off by two of the monster’s myrmidons.

I was shut up, my arms still pinioned, in the cellar of an adjoining house, while Maria, despite her loud shrieks of despair, was dragged to another place of confinement. But for her, and for that hope that never forsakes the unfortunate, I should have dashed my brains out against the walls of my prison. Oh, how long did the night appear! Burning with feverish anguish, consumed with thirst, it seemed to me that weeks of misery had passed, when the

hour of six was sounded by the village church.

My prison opened, and I was led out to the scene of the most refined ferocity that cannibals could devise. The spot chosen for their pastimes was an amphitheatre of rocks, clothed with the most luxuriant vegetation, while here and there rivulets falling in cascades on the brink of the rugged cliff, gave to the scenery a picturesque appearance, which in happier days must have made the recess a delightful retreat for the weary traveller, or the fond lover. Now how changed!—the Guerilla were assembled, grouped around their wine skins sitting on the grass. Six of my unfortunate companions, now awakened from their slumber, and stripped of every article of clothing, were tied to as many stakes—doomed, I soon found, to become living targets!

The signal of *festivity* was given; several of the ruffians were drawn out at the distance of forty paces, taking deliberate aim at their victims with carbine and rifle, commencing at the lower part of their bodies, to

prolong their wretched existence. Some of these miserable creatures bore their sufferings with Spartan fortitude ; while others uttered dismal yells and supplications.

Pistol practice succeeded the musket. The barbarians approached twenty paces nearer, and mercifully aimed at their victims' hearts. They soon had ceased to live. I was all this time tied to a tree, to witness the horrible work of blood that none but Spaniards, the descendants of the conquerors of Peru and Mexico, could have imagined. Alas ! their cruelty was still more refined ! a game of what they called *nine-pins* was proposed ; nine pits had been dug in the earth, and nine of my companions stripped naked, were forced into them. The pits must have been already prepared for the infernal pastime ; for they were so deep, that only the head of the victim rose above the level of the earth ;—and for *bowls*—gracious and merciful heaven !—they tried their skill in striking off the heads of the victims they had shot, to roll them against their living companions. Fatigued with this savage exercise, pistol firing again

commenced ; bets were made upon every shot, and I soon beheld my brave companions close their eyes for ever.

Horrible as was this scene, still it was bearable, when I reflected on the anticipated misery of seeing my beloved wife submitted to the fury of these wretches. A signal was given—the officers sat around Don Pablo, who was calmly stretched at the foot of an ancient and shady oak tree. Dice and a dice-box were rattled in hellish expectation, and my wife was led forth, stripped of all covering, amidst the brutal shouts of these monsters, who were fighting for their *fueros* and their *church* ! The victim of their ferocity was calm, but so enfeebled that she could scarcely step between her guards, her eyes were fixed on the earth, her countenance pale and deadly ; but when, looking up for an instant, she perceived me, a crimson blush suffused her cheek, and again her eyes were cast in unspeakable misery on the ground.

A roar of tumultuous merriment resounded on all sides. I felt the blood rushing to my brain as I heard the monsters call out the

throw; an apoplectic sensation overcame me, when on a sudden loud shouts arose around the rocks, and a well-directed fire was poured from their summits on the murderous group. Mariquita was on her knees; and soon a cloud of our *voltigeurs* were seen descending the cliffs. In a moment I was free; and Pablo and all his companions had ceased to live, put to the bayonet by our brave liberators, who, apprized of our fate, had tracked the steps of our pitiless foes, who call us cruel and merciless, when avenging crimes that would make one blush at bearing the name of man!

I had now no personal enemy to fear, and was shortly promoted. I resumed my usual duties, with a mind as tranquil as the nature of so fearful a war could allow. Not so with my wife; so long as we were in Spain, she dreaded the machinations of the Countess, nor was she mistaken.

Some months after, when at Merida, I was suddenly arrested in my quarters, and brought before my general. He placed in my hands a letter directed to me by the chief of Cuesta's

staff, in which he thanked me for the correct information I had given him, and inclosed an order upon Cadiz for 1000 dollars. It was in vain that I declared that this letter was a base fabrication to destroy me; the late movements of the Spanish army had clearly proved that they had received recent intelligence from our camp. I was ordered *au secret*, and a court-martial assembled to try me.

The horror of my situation exceeded, if possible, my former misery. To be accused of the basest treason!—of having corresponded with an enemy that I personally abhorred, and that you Englishmen will soon learn to despise and hate, was more than I could bear. Fortunately my colonel was convinced of my innocence, and the night before my trial he entered my room, led me out of the house, where two horses were in readiness for us. We safely passed our outposts, and the following morning we claimed the British protection at Montijo. I am now I hope, going to England, where I shall exert the influence of my friends in Paris to prove my innocence, which, I trust, will be made as

manifest as I most sincerely hope that in your generous minds I no longer shall labour under that just obloquy which a deserter at all times deserves.

This curious anecdote of Spanish amour led to the recital of various adventures in which our officers had borne a conspicuous part ; one of our party, a Captain Raymond, among others, related the following singular story of two young ladies of Merida, which, perhaps, the recent mention of that city brought to his recollection.

THE SISTERS OF MERIDA.

ALTHOUGH the ancient city of Merida is situated in anything but a picturesque position, being built on an extensive plain, with scarcely a tree to variegate its barren appearance, yet it is interesting on account of its remains of Roman grandeur, having once been the *Emerita Augusta*, capital of Lusitania. The ruins of its splendid and interminable bridge over the Guadiana, its Naumachia and Amphitheatre are as worthy the traveller's notice as many of the proudest remains of the mistress of the old world. As I was sauntering, one beautiful summer evening, amongst its silent ruins, the hum of chirping grasshoppers, the usual songsters of a Spanish bivouac, the only sound that disturbed the tranquillity that reigned in the once

busy and animated scene, I was suddenly roused from my reverie by a prelude on the guitar, followed by a lovely voice, singing in broken French the old soldier's song, *Adieu, je pars pour l'armée*. As the unseen songstress proceeded in her ditty, it was evident, by the tremulous tone which her voice gradually assumed more especially when pronouncing the last words,

Je vais mourir pour ma patrie
Puisque je ne vis plus pour toi,

that one of our more favoured French predecessors had won the maiden's heart by the two most effectual means of winning a woman's affection—music,—and teaching her a foreign tongue—when, somehow or other, the master generally begins by making her conjugate the verb “to love,” when the fair pupil in turn assumes the magisterial rod, and, as our transatlantic descendants would say, “reciprocates instruction,”—such an exchange of tongues is the *ne plus ultra* of youthful bliss! Alas! I once enjoyed this delicious tuition in Malta,

in days long, long gone by, but never forgotten, although the Portuguese and Spanish languages have succeeded in banishing my fondly taught Sicilian lisp.

I cautiously drew near the spot whence the harmonious sounds had proceeded, and soon discovered, under an ivy-clad broken arch of the aqueduct, two lovely *Estremenhas*,* whom I had often met at the Merida *Tertulias*. I had no idea of their being acquainted with the French language—an accomplishment that I had then accidentally discovered; and having been educated in Paris, and speaking French like a native, I addressed the lovely girls in a language which, from what I heard, I judged must have been their predilection; they hastily threw on their mantillas, which they had laid aside to enjoy the evening breeze; and the eldest, the fascinating Pepita, with the usual ejaculation of “Jesu!” exclaimed:

“Why, Don Juan, you must be a Frenchman!”

* An appellation given to the natives of Estremadura.

"No, lady," I replied, "I am not ; but was brought up in that country from an early period of my life."

"Come, come," said the lovely girl, tapping my arm with her fan—the fatal and deadly weapon of a Spanish girl, more perilous than the dagger the Andalusian maids wear girded in their garters—"why deny your country? From the very first moment I saw you at Donna Barbara's Tertulias, I knew that you were not an Englishman. You do not believe me—ask my sister Juanita?"

"*De veras*, indeed, indeed," replied my pretty namesake, an enchanting girl of sixteen, whose eyes bespoke all the cardinal feelings of the north, the east, the south, and west of Spain.

"Come then tell me, lovely Juanita," we were familiar enough to use diminutives, there exists such a sympathetic power in the sound of a language we are fond of, when accidentally pronounced in a foreign land, "tell me, Juanita, what is there about me that you should not have taken me for an Englishman?"

"I do not know—everything."

"But everything means nothing, they say."

"Oh, my everything means a vast deal," she replied, with a winning *naïveté*—"ask my sister Pepita; she may explain what I mean better than I can express, for I am a silly girl; and you know our old proverb says '*todos los Juanes son bobos*.'"^{*}

"Many thanks for the compliment," I replied; "your sister just now called me *Juan*. At any rate, I'd rather tread the path of folly with so fair a namesake, than be blessed with wisdom under another guide."

"*Ai-me!*" she sighed, "and you are no Frenchman! *picaro, picaro!*"[†]

"Now tell me, Donna Pepita," I added, earnestly turning to her sister—for, by this time, we were walking about the ruins, each of my interesting companions having taken one of

^{*} All Johns are fools. The *Juana* of the Spaniards is to their *Juan* pretty nearly what the French *Jeanette* is to *Jean*.

[†] Rogue, rogue.

my arms, "tell me, what could have given rise to this strange fancy of my being a Frenchman?"

"I shall tell you, although it may make you vain;—I hate the English."

"That is a cruel sentence."

"I may esteem them for their many good qualities, their patriotism, their courage, their—their—"

"Their generosity," I replied, coming, methought, to her assistance.

"By no means; oh, no, no; I would much rather be robbed politely by a Frenchman who apologizes for the painful necessity, than receive the insulting relief of an Englishman, as he tenders his assistance as alms to the mendicant. I may pity the one, but the other seems to pity me; that is an odious feeling of degradation. Pity is next akin to contempt; therefore it is that man is prone to detest his benefactor; for benefactors are not always delicate in their method of bestowing their bounty—and bounty is a degrading bond between master and slave."

I was amazed at the keen philosophy of a

simple, unsophisticated, I might say, uneducated Spanish girl ; such however I have mostly found them, endowed with natural talents which might put the most refined instructor to the blush. But Pepita had touched upon a chord that seemed to vibrate keenly in her bosom, and thus continued :

“The English, wherever they are, aim at superiority—a sentiment that must ever be hostile to friendship, or to love ; for love delights in a certain equality ; one may feel and admire a glory in the superiority of the object of one’s affection, but we cannot brook the idea of mastery. We may be willingly slaves, but our bonds must be woven with flowers, entwined by ourselves, in hours of mutual pleasure, and not shackles cast around us by a conqueror’s hand. You English boast of your wealth ; the possessors of Peru and Mexico are wealthier. They boast of their power—it must yield to the influence of a Spanish maiden’s fan. You are heretics, in short, in religion and in love ; mistake me not, Señor—although educated in a nunnery, where I learnt nothing more than my

prayers and the art of confectionary, I am not a bigot—but, methinks, were I to quit the bosom of our mother church, I should no longer be fit to love. You boast that your religion acts upon the mind—the head; ours acts upon our senses—the heart. You may have more reason on your side; what has love to do with reason? *Caramba!* reason!—a withered flower, a bit of ribband, a lock of hair—are greater treasures to a lover than the mines of Potosi! Your reasonable man would not value them a straw. A lover must sigh, and weep, and moan in constant anguish, when absent—must sacrifice his repose, his ambition, his reputation, his friends, his fortune, for her he loves; ay, and for all this abnegation of self he must be satisfied, and esteem himself amply rewarded by a smile, or a respondent pressure of the hand, which bids him hope! What has reason to do with all this? For recollect a man may love without his affection being requited—a woman never.”

“Are you quite certain of that?” I observed with a smile.

“There—there!” exclaimed little Juanita,

"look at that smile of vanity, and let him say he's not a Frenchman!"

I could not help admiring the instinctive tact of the young girl; but urged her sister to continue her curious disquisition on love.

"It is the nature of our sex," she pursued, "to desire to win the affection of more persons than we possibly can love. But in this sentiment, we sometimes fall into a sad mistake, since we are apt to confound love with admiration, and too often fancy that those who admire whatever beauty we may possess, are heart-smitten. It is this doubt that should put us upon our guard; we all know that, when we possess any attraction, we can obtain admirers—not so lovers—such, at least, as I have described them and as they ought to be."

"But surely," I replied, "one of the parties must love first? the sentiment cannot be mutually spontaneous."

"From the nature of our education," she replied, "it should first be kindled in man; we may, no doubt feel partiality, nay may wish to be beloved by one whom we may have singled

out of the crowd of our admirers ; but it is just because admirers crowd around us, that we fear that one among them may merely wish to be the most favoured, that his vanity may triumph over that of his rivals ; and, believe me, more men have married handsome girls without fortune, for the mere pride of preventing others from possessing them than from any motive of true and pure affection."

"Then could you love a man who might have loved another?"

"Yes ; for my vanity might make me think that his second love was more ardent than the first. Your sex is as vain as ours, if not more so ; but you do feel so conscious of your deceitful nature, that your affections are much more easily kindled by fancy and conceit than in a woman's breast? Thus *you* seldom can feel satisfied that *we* can forget our first attachment ; and convinced of the dangers of loving, we struggle with our sentiments until we believe that we may entertain them with confidence."

"Well, my fair sophist," I replied, "I fear

that, according to your own system, you are too reasonable a being to love with all that warmth that you have so energetically described ; for my part, I verily believe that love is a sympathetic feeling beyond all speculation. We love we know not why ; and our partialities and antipathies are equally unaccountable and irresistible."

"That's what I also think," observed Juanita with a sigh.

I looked at her, and met her large black eyes fixed on mine ; I knew not how it was. She held my right arm ; my elbow was gently pressed on her left side, and I fancied that her little heart was fluttering very fast.

I had no particular objection to strengthen the theory of her love, by a practical illustration, and at their request proceeded to relate a curious example of this singular sympathy.

THE SOUTHAMPTON BALL ROOM.

"Some years ago, I was quartered in a town in England, called Lymington; it was at that time a foreign depot—"

"Ah, the truth will out!" exclaimed Pepita, interrupting me; "you are an Englishman! *Va usted con Deos !*"

"In my regiment we had an officer remarkable for his taciturnity and disinclination to join the parties to which we were occasionally invited; for, strange to say, the ladies of the place preferred the society of foreign officers to that of their own countrymen."

"It showed their sense," smartly observed Juanita.

"And mine was a foreign corps. We went a great deal into company; Osmond, for that

was my friend's name, scarcely ever spoke to a woman. Mathematics, drawing, music, were his occupations."

"Oh, if he was a musician, he must have known how to love," interrupted Pepita.

"That's not quite so clear."

"No, indeed," added Juanita.

"Well, it so happened that we were to go to a ball at Southampton; the party being made up, we jocosely asked Osmond to join us, and judge of our surprise, when he assented to the proposition. To the ball we went; Osmond sat in a corner, gazing about him with a vacant stare. We pressed him to select a partner, never for a moment conceiving that our cynic philosopher could condescend to such an abnegation of his dignity. To our utter amazement, he requested the master of the ceremonies to introduce him to a most lovely person who was seated at the further end of the room. We thought him insane; he was introduced, accepted; the lady looked up, and blushed a crimson hue; he looked down,

and twirled his fingers—both seemed equally embarrassed. Surely, we thought, this must be some former adventure, accidentally revived. The music struck up; they danced—he as awkwardly as an unpractised dancer—she as uncomfortably as any lady could be, figuring with a partner unacquainted with the figures. Every eye was fixed upon the couple—a circumstance evident to her, but fortunately unperceived by him, as he otherwise would most undoubtedly have inflicted some fatal bruises in his wide kicking.

“The set over, he conducted the lady to her seat with as much *gaucherie* as he bowed to her, and stole out of the gay throng with as sheepish a precipitation as though he had committed some unpardonable *faux pas*, whereas he had only trodden on one lady’s toes, kicked a gentleman’s shins, torn one gown, and bobbed his head in another young lady’s face, smothering her with powder.

“We all rallied Osmond on this strange adventure; but he heeded not our mirth, and

proceeded to inquire who was his fair partner when, to his utter disappointment he learned she was a Mrs. Sydney, lately married to a clergyman near Winchester. The despair depicted in his countenance at this unpleasant piece of intelligence was truly ludicrous ; he started up, exclaiming,

“ ‘By Heavens! I am the most unlucky dog on earth!’

“ He hastily quitted the ball-room ; a very short time after, the fair stranger appeared indisposed, and withdrew in apparent agitation. This circumstance confirmed our suspicion of some former intimacy having existed between the parties.

“ On our return to the hotel, we found Osmond pondering over his disappointment and a bowl of punch. We bantered him on this intrigue, when he assured us most religiously that he had met Mrs. Sydney for the first time in his life ; but that he had scarcely beheld her when a secret monitor seemed to whisper in his ear—‘ that lady shall be thy wife.’

“ This strange observation confirmed our be-

lief that his mental faculties were slightly impaired, and I considered him in the light of a monomaniac until we parted, for incessantly was he speaking of his beauteous partner, and of his confident hope of being united to her. To the junior officers this fancy afforded much amusement ; but, as Osmond was really a most amiable man, I beheld the aberration, for such I deemed his fond visions, with sincere regret.

“ I sailed for the Mediterranean ; Osmond was promoted to a regiment in America. Three years after, I returned to England, and was quartered at Gosport ; Osmond’s regiment was at Winchester. Anxious to know the result of this strange foreboding, which I had never forgotten, I started for his garrison, and lost no time in enquiring for my old friend. To my utter amazement he had lately married the object of his first attachment ! Her husband had died in consequence of a fall from his horse in the New Forest. Osmond again met her at Southampton, in the same ball-room, was reintroduced, and soon after married—not with-

out having entered into a most curious conversation on the subject. But what may appear still more strange than that which I have related, (since any man may fancy himself in love, and look out for some event that might unite him to its object,) the very same presentiment experienced by Osmond had struck his partner, so forcibly, indeed, that in her agitation she left the ball room, with her sister, and on her return home, told her, in a flood of tears, that something had whispered in her ear—‘ that stranger shall be thy husband !’

“ Certainly, in this case, there neither could have existed admiration or love, at least on the part of the lady ; as Osmond was the last person on earth calculated to excite an affection at first sight.”

“ The story is a strange one,” observed the eldest of my companions ; “ but it either tends to prove that the English are a cold calculating set of fatalists, who act upon a whimsical idea,

or that the devil sports with the hearts and persons of heretics."

"The Archbishop of Toledo could not have solved the problem with more ingenuity," I replied. "But, prythee go on with your objections to my countrymen."

"Come, come, Juan, name them your countrymen, and I shall abhor you."

"I shall be a citizen of the world, if you desire it."

"Well then, I consider them a nation of purse-proud shop-keepers. Your nobility, who merely owe their titles to their wealth, affect the airs of politeness which they were taught by more polished countries; your young scions of rank were only considered accomplished after they had made their European tour, when they returned with all the vices of their neighbours, combined with their original unmannerly bearing. Your untitled gentlemen naturally ape their superiors. When they give themselves airs, it is mere imitation; and it is only when they are brutally vulgar that they are natural. Politeness is

foreign to their manners—for they consider it a degradation ; their lofty demeanour does not arise from a conviction of superiority, but is merely an assumption in the dread that others should appreciate them at their real value. They are miserable when in the society of their superiors ; yet they crouch to them, and court their smiles, that they may be, in turn, overbearing with their inferiors, although they would equally court the most menial for power—not for the means of doing good, but of enriching themselves ; for I have been told, and I believe it, that at the election of their *cortes* they will embrace a shoe-black, and walk arm in arm with a tinker. They seem to me, to rest their judgment upon mere appearance, and to be biassed in their opinion by the most trivial circumstances. They look upon us Spaniards as brutes, because we eat garlic, and expect that we must yield the palm of gentility to men who roll under the table after their voracious repasts. They scorn to accept an hospitable invitation at our board, because we dine at one o'clock, and enjoy a *siesta* after dinner,

instead of remaining over the bottle. In short, there are few Englishmen who would not value their horses more than their mistresses, prefer the chase to a love suit, and a hunting song, or a vulgar ballad to a serenade."

"Verily, Senhora, you have traced a severe portrait of the English; and will you not allow them some good qualities?"


"Many admirable ones; but they are calculated for the camp, the cabinet, and not for a lady's *boudoir*. They are courageous and patriotic—for they are proud of the country that gave them birth—because they are proud of themselves. They are incorruptible; for honesty they know is the basis of all profitable commercial affairs. They are generous, because they can afford it;—an obligation that cannot be repaid is the sweetest incense that can be burnt on the altar of vanity.—The English, in fine, I can compare to a rough diamond, of great intrinsic value, but which requires too much trouble in polishing, to be worth the price put upon it by the owner."

It was evident that Pepita did not speak

from her own knowledge of the English, but had merely repeated the opinion of her French lover, since it was quite clear that her affection was bestowed on one of our enemies. I was anxious to seek a little revenge, and said,

“ Now, Senhora, that you have so candidly described an Englishman, pray what is your opinion of the French ?”

“ I shall give you my thoughts concerning them with the same frankness, although I know you to be one yourself. They are a trifling amiable race. When they perceive that they are disliked, they seek by every possible means to efface the unfavourable impression, by ingratiating themselves by that servility which is ever certain to please woman ;—our sex wishes to command, and they crouch before us. They wield the sword as bravely as the English ; but the battle over, they willingly take the distaff in hand ; although they have no religion, they join us in our devotions ; and if the infidels think us idolaters, they are readily forgiven—since they idolize us. They merely go to church, because we are there ; and while our



eyes are fixed upon the sainted Virgin in our chapels, we perceive theirs are fixed upon us, whenever we turn round, when our beads are told; they sign themselves with holy water, because our fingers have been dipped in the lustral vessel; and, certain am I, they would go to confession if a pretty nun sat in the confessional, and inflicted the penance she prescribed. In short, they are pleasant enemies, and your people are disagreeable friends. A polite person, who appears blind to our faults, must ever be more amiable than the candid creature who is ever pointing them out. As a Spaniard, I wish that every Frenchman was driven off our soil; but I also do most sincerely wish that we could expel them without the odious aid of England."

"After this declaration, Senhora," I replied, "may I presume to ask what is your opinion of your own countrymen?"

"That question, Senhor, might lead me to suspect that you *really are an Englishman*. The French have a saying, Don Juan, *il faut toujours laver son linge sale chez soi*, and I believe

that your question is answered by the proverb."

"No, no," exclaimed Juanita, with much vivacity, "my sister has been candid in regard to foreigners; I shall be equally so in regard to our own countrymen. Pepita is prejudiced in favour of the French; I as yet—believe that I am unprejudiced."

Here she sighed—her voice faltered—and methought her young heart beat in still more rapid pulsation.

"You are a child Juanita!" answered her sister, "what can you know about Spaniards?"

"Surely as much," sharply replied the lovely girl, "as you can know about the English;—as to the French—that's another matter."

Pepita blushed deeply, bit her lips, and by her silence, allowed her young sister thus to proceed:

"I can't bear the Spaniards, for they are such a horrible jealous set; they are not jealous of *us*, but of themselves. They are as proud as the English, without their good qualities; and as cruel as the French, without their cou-

rage. When I read their history by Father Mariana, that our curate lent us, I am sure they can only be proud of what they were, and not of what they are. *Caramba!* if the Cid, or Gonsalvo de Cordova had been alive, not a *gavacho* would have dared to show his face on this side of the Pyrenees. *Valga me dios*, there is not one of them fit to lace the shoes of the maid of Saragossa!"

"Silly girl," replied Pepita, with an indignant and truly Spanish frown, "do you forget the heroes of Baylen?"

"Well," answered Juanita, with a toss of her head and a twirl of her fan, "if they are heroes, why do they call in the *colorados** to help them? and if they want their help, they should be civil to them, and not let them starve, *demonios!* after the battle of Talavera the poor English soldiers looked as if they had been fed with chesnut skins! When the French are hungry, they hang an *alcalde* for dinner, or

* The Scarlets—name given to our soldiers.

shoot a *padre* for supper—and they soon have plenty; ay, and when they want to have a dance, they send their soldiers to fetch us; and although we may cry out murder, we nevertheless trip it nimbly till daybreak, whatever our *papas* and *mammas* may say about it. As to the English, poor devils, they haven't a dance left in them. *La bariga hace andar las piernas*, and they looked as empty when they marched in as the bagpipes of their nasty *descalçados*, with their foxy heads as carrotty as Judas. The very moschetoës could not find a drop of blood on their bare legs!"

This description of her countrymen given by the young girl was certainly more natural than the recondite observations of her more experienced sister; and I could not but smile at her *naïveté*. By this time, we had arrived at their dwelling, near Trajan's Arch, and I was about taking my departure, and asking permission to pay them my respects, when they both seemed surprised, and insisted that I should walk in and sup with them.

They introduced me to their father, by birth a Portuguese, but who had long served in the Spanish army in America ; he welcomed me with all the frankness of an old soldier ; *higades** of chocolate and biscuits were served ; but the old gentleman called for a flask of old Pedro Ximenes, merrily pledged with me and his daughters, hob-nobbing his glass up and down with *vivas* to the success of our combined armies.

There was a piano in the room, an instrument rarely met with in the country towns of Spain, and the girls were still more confirmed in their idea of my being a Frenchman, when to their great surprise, I sat down to the instrument, and played and sang some French romances, with which they seemed well acquainted.

Supper succeeded,—an excellent roast and salad, with an abundance of good wine, plentifully served and cheerfully drank ; we were all in high spirits, Pepita speaking French to me, and Juanita correcting my Spanish. From

* Small cups for chocolate.

the dining room we repaired to the *sahual*,* where we were soon joined by a party of merry girls and Spanish officers ; and songs, accompanied by the guitar, admirably played by both sisters, enlivened the night, until the church clock struck two.

One of our officers, a Major, was quartered in the house, and, as we were about departing, he was brought home by another officer and his servant, scarcely able to recognize his billet—staggering through our merry circle, he hiccupped, “damn their infernal caterwauling,” and made the best of his way to his chamber.

“There’s an Englishman for you !” exclaimed Pepita ; “*puerco* !† he has not opened his lips to any one in the house since he has been in it ; and can you be surprised at our disliking men who seem to consider it beneath their dignity to accept our hospitality, or who even do not seek to learn our language.”

The family would have wished me to take up

* Hall, or porch.

† Hog !

my abode with them ; but the Major was too comfortable to be persuaded to accept another billet. He insisted upon his right to occupy the second best room in the house, and Pepita, not willing to disturb her aged father, had given up her chamber.—He had insisted upon a drawing-room, which he never used but to smoke in, or drink grog with some boon companions, and they had given up their only sitting apartment ;—he had insisted upon stabling for three horses, and they had turned out their mules. One altercation only had arisen between him and his host ;—not being satisfied with the *brasiero*, the only means they had of warming his room, he had sent for his pioneers to knock out, or knock up a chimney—an improvement totally impracticable, without pulling down the side of the house. The old gentleman interposed, the Major persisted, and his host had to apply for protection to the British commandant, who calmly told the Major that it was useless to endeavour to make the Spaniards comfortable in spite of themselves ; and if they chose not

to enjoy the comfort of a fireside, we could not oblige them.

The Major was obliged to desist, but his servants resolved to avenge their master's disappointment, and deprived the family of the only fireside they had—the kitchen hearth. His two servants, and his batman, and his orderly, with three wives and four children, took possession of the chimney and the stoves; and for peace sake, the family were obliged to have their dinner cooked in an out-house; even this they thought an intrusion on a field officer's rights—and they demanded this out-house, to put up two donkeys belonging to his servant's wife, there being no room for them in the stable.

“How differently,” observed Pepita, with a sigh, “did our last French officer behave! He was a colonel, commanding two thousand men, a dignitary of the Legion of Honour; yet he threw in his abundant rations with our fare, and lived at our board, while his servants joined our domestics in cheerful harmony.”

"True," I observed, "but their very rations were levied by force upon your fellow citizens, and never paid for ; whereas we make good all our demands."

"Oh, fie upon you !" exclaimed Pepita ; "you have lived too long among the English ; as if money could compensate for the insults we daily meet with at the hands of this barbarian ! The French colonel only occupied one small room, shared with us in every comfort he received from his native country. The band of his regiment played at our door every evening ; he gave the Merida girls a ball once a week, and his servants attended us as respectfully as their master ; and when my poor father was ill, he only left his bedside when duty called him from it. It is true, he was an enemy ; but when he, who had a brother flayed alive by our Guerillas, could forget that we were Spaniards, we might also forget that France had given him birth."

I was silent. Pepita was evidently unhappy ; she seldom heard from her lover, and she did not dare to correspond with him, for fear

of incurring the suspicion of treason. I therefore took charge of her letters, and gave them to one of our officers on the staff to be forwarded by any flag of truce we might have to send.

Many were the happy hours I passed in this amiable family; Juanita every day became dearer to me. My pretty—my merry Juanita!—thou art now married! May happiness be the lot of thee and thine!

Strange to say, notwithstanding my repeated assurances to the contrary, nothing could persuade them that I was an Englishman. At last came the order to march.

Never did the arrival of a *route* affect me more sincerely; even the old soldier embraced me, and shed tears at the thought of my departure. Juanita was the picture of misery; yet never had I breathed to her one word of love. I had told her that I was married, and she longed to see my wife—would ask me to describe her person—her temper.

“ Oh, Don Juan,” she would say, “ how anxious she must be to make you happy! And

tell me, can an Englishwoman love? Do you think that her cold heart could feel like that of a Spaniard? She surely would let you write to me—call me your *hermanita*—your little sister. Oh, Don Juan, why did you ever come to Merida!"

The day before our departure, she did not make her appearance. I grieved at her absence, yet still I thanked her for it. We were to march the following morning at four o'clock; our supper was silent and mournful; Pepita seemed absorbed in thought. She left the room without bidding me farewell. I withdrew, cordially shaking hands with the excellent old soldier.

As I returned to my quarters, which were close to their house, all was confusion and revelry; my companions sitting up all night carousing, to be up early in the morning, their servants packing up, trying on the bat mules' packsaddles; bolstering them, not to gall old sore backs and withers, swearing in broken Portuguese, French, and Spanish, execrating Spain, Portugal, mules and asses—kicking and thump-

ing the *rapas* and the *muchachos*, poor barefooted peasant boys, who led the officers' milch goats, for what soldiers call "monkey's pay—more kicks than halfpence." And then it began to rain, and they turned their execrations from man and beast to heaven and earth. The tarpaulins to protect the baggage were missing, the girths had lost the buckles, and the buckles had lost their prongs. All the miseries arising from neglect in long cantonments, crowded upon them; tents were found, but the tent-poles and pegs had probably been burnt; packing ropes had been converted into lines for drying linen—none could be purchased at this hour of the night. Their canteens had been dried and warped, and their grog was running out through the leaks. Then came orders to fetch three days' provisions, and all the commissaries were consigned to perdition. Their masters' dogs, as if aware of the issue of meat, followed their servants to the butchers, where they remained, devouring offal; while the most thoughtless of all animals, the grumbling soldier, having drawn a string through the palpi-

tating beef, dragged it after him, along the mire, though he would have to eat it for the following three days :—and then the dogs were missing, and Pompey, and Cæsar, and Nero were whistled for in vain, and doubly and triply execrated ! And then a horse, or a mule or an ass had cast a shoe—and all the farriers in the universe were doomed to perdition ! Then came an order for the baggage to move an hour before the brigade, when Wellington and Bonaparte were accommodated with the warmest billets in the infernal regions.

While this troublesome bustling prevailed in the officers' quarters, to the no small annoyance of the landlord's family, who were called upon for lights, and oil and wick, and cord and packthread, with the roar of *Veni a ka patron mas cordo*, "some cordo, some packthreado, confound you ! Senhor,"—a scene widely different was taking place in my chamber.

I had just seated myself on my couch, my head resting on my hand, deeply thinking on poor Juanita, and preparing to dispel my gloomy reflections with the soldier's usual pana-

cea—a glass of brandy and water, when a gentle tap at my door aroused me, and to my utter surprise, Pepita, wrapped in a cloak, entered my room, accompanied by my servant, who had guided her through the busy throng.

She made signs to my servant to withdraw ; and after locking my door, took a seat ; for some moments she was silent, pressing the palm of her hand on her burning forehead, as if hesitating to address me.

“ Speak, dearest Pepita ; speak, I beseech you.”

“ Juan,” she replied, with a faltering voice, “ whatever may be your decision or your sentiments, condemn me not for this step, which I am perhaps rashly taking. My sister is dear to me beyond expression, and her happiness has ever been my study. Judge then how wretched I must be when perceiving that unwillingly, nay, unwittingly, she has placed that happiness in your affection. I do not reproach you with having won her young heart ; she imprudently nourished a passion which her duty should have led her to resist ; but her efforts



and my expostulations were vain. She does not—she will not believe that your heart is not free. Your servants know of no tie that binds you. That you are a Frenchman we have never doubted;—what then can induce you to serve in the ranks of your country's foes? You, no doubt, belong to one of those families who fled their home in the fearful revolution that distracted France; but many of them have returned to their country—the Emperor has welcomed them to fortune and to rank. Seek then his clemency. In a few days the French army will be here; remain behind your troops—we will carefully conceal you until the first division marches in. I shall undertake to obtain leave for you to return to France, not to serve against your former companions in arms, and poor little Juanita may still be the happiest of women.”

I had no means of undeceiving her, more convincing than to show her my wife's letters.

"But," she replied, "you are a christian;* she must be a heretic—and you can get your marriage dissolved by our holy church."

In vain I persisted in assuring her that I was an Englishman and a protestant; she maintained her ground with all the pertinacity of a woman, till at last the loud blast of the bugle sounded the *turn-out*. My servant came in for my baggage, and I buckled on my sword. Pepita cast both her arms round my neck, exclaiming,

"Well, in pity for poor Juana, say that you will return, that you will some day come back to Merida. In the meanwhile, accept this trifle for Juanita's sake. This badge bears the image of *Maria das lagrimas*, the Virgin of tears! Think, oh think, how many will be shed for you! and may the sainted relic preserve you by night and by day from any evil that may await you!"

* In Spain the term christian is applied exclusively to Roman Catholics.

So saying, she passed a scapulary round my neck, bidding me to wear it on my heart; then fondly embracing me, threw her mantilla close over her, and hurried out of my chamber.

I have never seen her since, but met her lover under singular circumstances. It was at Arroyo Molino, when Hill, by a most skilful movement, surprised the corps of Girard; among the prisoners I observed a remarkably handsome officer, colonel of one of the regiments. He was blustering loudly for the loss of his baggage, which had no doubt been plundered by the Spanish or Portuguese. I assured him that every endeavour should be made to discover any object of value which he might have lost, when he exclaimed with true French *jactance*,

“ Parbleu, Monsieur, croyez-vous que je regrette mes habits, mon linge, mon argent ! Je me moque de ces vétilles là, mais voilà trois ans que je suis dans ce sacré pays, et j’ai malheureusement perdu ce qui ne peut jamais se retrou-

ver, et ce qui d'ailleurs peut compromettre la majeure partie du sexe de l'Espagne."

"*Qu'avez-vous donc perdu, Monsieur?*" I replied.

"*Perdu, Monsieur, sacrebleu, j'ai perdu le journal de mes amours !*"

In which journal, no doubt, the name of Pepita was conspicuous : this I soon suspected when he requested me to forward to Merida a letter directed to the amiable girl.

Among the many curious individuals we had taken on that day, was also an old French colonel, at least seventy years of age; yet his white whiskers were twisted and frizzed with the utmost care, and his grey hair curled with perfect symmetry. Wishing to afford him some amusement, I one day offered to accompany him on a shooting excursion; the proposal he declined with the utmost politeness, on the following singular plea :

"*Monsieur,*" said he, "*j'ai à vous rendre mes remerciemens, mais je ne chasse plus ; que voulez-vous ! autrefois je m'amusais à la chasse, mais*

à présent que je suis d'un âge mur, je m'occupe uniquement de l'amour, et je puis vous assurer, que sans la chasse, j'y trouve un exercice suffisant."

Why Pepita was not united to her French lover, I have never been able to learn; but have no doubt that he found an *embarras de choix* among the numerous candidates for his smile *couchées sur son journal*.

Raymond here terminated his narrative. He had alluded to a Maltese adventure, and the romantic character of his Spanish tale, induced us to request him to give an account of it—the more interesting, as none of the party had ever been quartered in that island. His acquiescence with our request will be found in the succeeding volume.

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